
A
PRESERVATIVE
AGAINST
SOCINIANISM.
THE THIRD PART.



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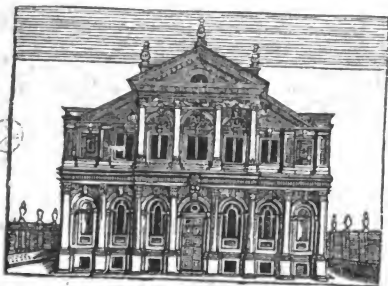
A
PRESERVATIVE
AGAINST
SOCINIANISM:

SHEWING

The necessity of Faith, and that *Socinus* and his Followers on the contrary, by making the persuasion of the mind concerning divine Truths, a useless or at best an indifferent matter, plainly undermine all Revealed, and more especially the Christian Religion.

THE THIRD PART.

By JONATHAN EDWARDS D.D.



O X O N.

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I

A
PRESERVATIVE
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Socinianism.

IN pursuance of the method laid down in the first part of the Preservative, the Reader might expect that I should proceed to shew the opposition between the *Impious opinions of Socinus*, and the other Articles of our *Holy Faith* not mentioned in the two former Treatises, and which remain yet to be discoursed of. But omitting at present to handle those matters in that order as was then proposed, I have at this time rather made choyce, to lay before the Reader several of those loose and irreligious positions, which are to be found in the Books of the forenamed *Socinus* and his followers, whereby they have plainly struck not only at the *Christian Religion*, the overthrow of which seems to have bin their first and principal aim; but likewise at all Religion whether *natural or revealed*, against which they have advanced sundry pernicious assertions, some of which are plainly expressed, others more covertly insinuated in their Writings, whereby they have laid the foundations of that *Infidelity and Atheisme*, which under several shapes, and divers disguises, doth at this time too far prevail in these parts of the World.

A

And

And hereby, tho I shall not exactly observe the method, I may yet, I hope, in some measure *answer*, and perhaps more effectually *compass* the design, which I chiefly proposed to my self when I first undertook this work; which was to fortify the minds of men, and guard them from the infection of those errors, which have so hastily, and I am sorry to say, so largely diffused themselves among divers persons of different ranks and orders, to the great trouble and amazement of all such, who have not shaken off all fear of God, and regard for his holy Religion as yet preserved and established among us.

There are none who are any ways conversant in these matters, but very well know, that many of the Socinians, especially heretofore, were such who put on the outward shape and semblance of a more than ordinary piety, and in their writings have advanced the precepts of Morality to a very great height, in which they have bin very copious and pathetical, in declaiming against vice, recommending virtue, and with great vehemence pressing the necessity of a good life; which we must all acknowledge is one of *the principal*, and as they tell us *the only end* of all Religion. How far they have bin in good earnest in all this, is not so easy nor so safe for any of us to determin; it will therefore become us to leave them to the judgment of Almighty God, by whose most righteous sentence, they and we must in the conclusion either stand or fall. Only thus much I cannot forbear to say upon this occasion, that by advancing Morality upon the ruins of the Christian Religion, and at the same time that they enforce obedience to the Laws of Christ, by *undermining those motives* which are, tho not the *only*, yet the *chief and principal causes* which produce and support it, they take effectual care to render all their exhortations, as far as in them lyes, useless and insignificant, and thereby give too great occasion to *suspect their sincerity* in this whole affair.

But let their intentions be what they will, it is certain that by these means, they have very notably gain'd these two, and those no inconsiderable advantages: *1st*, hereby they have prevailed with many, who otherwise seem to be of a different opinion from them, to entertain very *favorable thoughts*, nay a *very high esteem* of their

their persons and writings, for the sake of their Piety: and this esteem, by degrees helps to *extenuate their errors*, and covers the malignity of them, which in time come to be accounted but small and very pardonable mistakes.

2ly, Which is a necessary consequence of the former, they hereby, (I mean among them who entertain those favorable thoughts of them) take off the keenness and edge of those resentments, which are absolutely needful to engage men in a warm and vigorous opposition of their pernicious tenets: for while you *extenuate an error*, at the same time and for the same reason, you *weaken the opposite truth*; and by the same degrees that your *zeal* against the one abates, your *concern* for the other must grow cool, and in time perhaps be extinguished. It is therefore certain and beyond all doubt, that it cannot be worth any mans time or pains, to be engaged in the vindication of a truth, where the opposite error is so harmless and inoffensive, that it scarce deserves our *notice* and much less a *confutation*.

And this seems to be the apprehension which many now adays have of the *bold and dangerous* opinions of *Socin.* as they formerly were accounted. For some there are who pretending to more than ordinary degrees of moderation, I mean in the affairs of Religion, in which a greater scope and latitude is thought fit and reasonable to be allowed, (for in their own private concerns they do not think themselves under the same strict obligation to practise it) who tell us, that there is indeed some difference between us and the *Socinians*, but it is only about some points of high speculation, which are placed out of the reach of humane reason; and what is not the object of *our knowledge*, need not be the subject of *our care*, neither is it fit that any man should be *concerned* for what he cannot fully and plainly *comprehend*. It is true our adversaries despise the *mysteries of the Gospel*, but at the same time they retain a due regard for the *precepts of it*, and are at perfect agreement with us, in promoting the true end of all Religion which is holyness and a good life. All other matters in dispute between us are but Metaphysical notions, and niceties of the Schooles, about which men may argue *pro* and *con*, and wrangle eternally; but never make either themselves or

others in the least either wiser or better; but rather on the other hand, they hereby do a great deal of mischief; by engaging men in *warm and senseless disputes* about trifling and inconsiderable matters; dividing their judgments, and alienating their affections from each other, and by that means, disturb the peace and quiet of the world, which is of greater consequence, and ought therefore to be more valued by us, than these curious but useless speculations.

Others there are who, tho they cannot think so mildly and gently of *these errors*, yet retain a great respect for the *Authors* of them, and therefore to hide their nakedness, in great compassion, and out of Christian charity to be sure, they fling a mantle of *justice and probity* over them: by which means they do at the same time *adorn their persons*, and conceal the *deformity* of their opinions, which in their own proper and native dress, would be apt to create a just horror and detestation in the minds of all sincere and serious Christians.

Now to take of the mask and disguise under which these impious opinions walk, not only *with impunity*, but with *confidence*, and some sort of *reputation and credit* among us, is the design of this present undertaking, and to represent them in their own true colours, stripped of all that paint and varnish wherewith they usually are disguised; and to place them in a true light, in which they may be viewed in their just deformity and danger, and with that numerous train of evil consequences which inevitably attend them: whereby it will appear, that under what softening terms soever some persons may think fit to represent them, yet that truly and really they are highly dishonorable to God, destructive to the souls of men, and tend plainly to the overthrowing of *all*, and particularly the *Christian Religion*; the ruin of which, I mean if these principles and opinions should universally prevail, they will more effectually accomplish, than any, or than all the other methods that ever yet have bin made use of to destroy it.

This is really a *heavy charge*, and therefore by some may be thought an *uncharitable one*; wherefore I must now proceed to make it good; and in order thereunto I shall first begin with

Revealed

Revealed Religion, which is comprehended in the writings of the Old and New Testament, which contain a discovery of all those things which we are obliged either to believe or practise in order to obtain Eternal life.

Now the truth and credit of these holy writings are more ways than one assaulted by these men; some whereof are more remote and at a greater distance, whereby they do not so much *directly oppose*, as *insidiously attack* the holy Scriptures, and thereby *secretly undermine* that Authority, which they pretend *openly to acknowledge*. Others are more plainly and directly levelled against their authority and inspiration.

Among those more oblique and remote methods, the principal which are made use of by them, and which I shall more largely insist upon are these two; The first is that whereby they speak slightly and contemptibly of Faith, in comparison of Morality, to which they do not only give the preference, but place in a kind of opposition to it: The second way is by advancing *Reason above Revelation*, and making it the *supreme judge* of all those discoveries which are made by this latter, and its dictates the *adequate Rule* both of our Faith and Practice.

I begin with the first, *viz.* That whereby they speak contemptibly of *Faith*, and consequently, must at the same time endeavor to bring into contempt that part of the revelation which concerns the *Articles of Faith*; for if faith be unnecessary, it can be for no other reason but because the *objects* about which it is conversant are so; and if those *objects* are trifling and inconsiderable, the *discovery and revelation* of them must be equally useless and insignificant; so that there being a necessary connexion between these three, their Credit and Reputation must stand or fall together: He that is not a friend to each, is a friend to none of them and he that opposes one, is an enemy to them all.

Now that I may proceed clearly and orderly in this matter; according to the method made use of in the two former Treatises, I shall shew, first what the *Scriptures* inform us concerning Faith and the Articles and mysteries of our Faith; and then what the *Socinians* and their friends say of these matters; which upon examination will be found to be directly repugnant to what the

holy writings affirm, tending plainly to disparage the *Revelation*, and thereby to bring into contempt the *Religion* which is discovered by it.

If we look into the Scriptures, and especially those of the New Testament, we shall find that they pretend to give us an information of some things concerning God both as to his *Nature, Counsels, and Decrees*, which no human understanding ever conceived, none the most piercing judgment that ever mortal man was possessed of could ever penetrate; and therefore they are styled by our Savior the *Mysterys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, which were *hid from the wise and prudent*, but by the distinguishing mercy of God revealed unto babes, *Matt. 11. 25.* Such was that great truth that Christ *was the son of the living God*, which was a truth of so great importance, that our Savior tells Peter who made that acknowledgment of him, that he would *build his Church upon it, as on a rock against which the Gates of Hell should not prevail*; and withall that it was of that sublime and mysterious nature, *that flesh and blood could not reveal it unto him, but his Father which was in Heaven, Math. 16. 17.* Again, as no man could know the son, who he really was, as to his *nature, descent, and original*, which was all Heavenly and Divine, but by the revelation of the Father; so could no man *know the Father but the Son, and he to whom the son would reveal him, Math. 11. 27.*

Now as to what concerns the *unity and essential perfections of the Godhead*, which as the Socinians and Remonstrants tell us was all that was necessary to be known of him, this was discovered long before: so likewise what relates to matters of meer morality and the practice of virtue, was in great measure made known before Christ's coming; and in that sense God might be said to be seen by the light of nature: but there were some other things, concerning his *person and subsistence*, as he stands in relation to the two other glorious persons in the Trinity, the Son and Holy Ghost, which no humane reason could possibly discover; as also concerning his *Counsel and Will*, in reference to those great transactions which concern the Salvation of mankind, which no wit of man could ever find out, as lying hid in the *secret and eternal Counsel of his mind*, which therefore no finite wisdom or under-

understanding could ever fathom or draw out, only he *who lay in the bosom of the Father*, either did, or could discover.

To the same purpose St. Paul assures us that there were several *deep things of God*, which were the results of his meer pleasure, which none could know or be conscious to, *but the Spirit of God, who searcheth all things*, and which things God hath revealed to mankind by his Spirit, 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11. or otherwise they must for ever have bin ignorant of them. Hence the doctrine of the Gospel which contains the discovery of these secrets, is styled the *mystery of the Gospel*, Eph. 6. 19. *The mystery of Christ* Col. 4. 3. *The mystery of Faith*, 1 Tim. 3. 9. And the great *mystery of Godliness*, verse 16. of that Chap. Nay the same Apostle, when he mentions these things thus revealed, speaks of them in very lofty and magnificent terms, that they were *such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, i. e.* the heart of man could not conceive and find them out, 1 Cor. 2. 9. And therefore we find him very copious in the magnifying his office and ministry, upon this very score, that he published the *wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom of God, ordained before the world unto our Glory*, v. 7. That he and the other Apostles were *Stewards of the mysteries of God*, 1 Cor. 4. 1.

From all which these two things seem to be very plain, and as one might reasonably think beyond all dispute. First, as was said before, that the Gospel contains a revelation of certain matters which no wit or invention of man could ever discover, no reason can comprehend: why else should they be styled *mysteries*, such as were hid from the wise and prudent, and known only by revelation? How could it otherwise with truth or decency be said, that *flesh and blood could not discover them*? and that the *Love of God*, and his merciful intentions for the Redemption of mankind, which were discovered in the Gospel, did *surpass all knowledge*? Eph. 3. 19. Lastly, it could not otherwise be agreeable to truth, what yet is roundly and without any hesitation delivered by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *That the natural man, who is guided only by the light of nature, or human reason, doth not perceive the things of the Spirit of God*, those spiritual and sublime mysteries which are revealed by the spirit of God: & diximus, non capit, percipit, intelligit.

intelligit, so this word is rendered by several Interpreters; the word *οἰσιν*, being the same with *γινώσκειν* which is used in the same verse; he neither doth understand, nor indeed can he know them: or let it be rendered as we do in our translation, *non accipit, recipit*, he doth not receive them, *non ita admittit ut approbet*, he doth not admit them so as to approve of them, it will amount to the same purpose. And indeed both these things seem to be very evident from the words: *viz.* that the things of God, which are discovered by the spirit of God in the Gospel, are such, as transcend the power of the most exalted reason to find out and comprehend; nay not only so, some of them do not only surpass, but seem opposite to the understandings of men guided only by the light of nature; they are foolishness unto him: *i.e.* absurd and repugnant to reason. So that in short, this *ανθρωπος ψυχικός*, this natural man, *qui non alia quam naturali animi luce præditus est, qui humanâ ratione omnia metitur*, who measures all things by the standard of human reason, cannot discover these sublime truths by his own natural abilities; and after they are discovered, he is so far from admitting and embracing them, that he rather rejects them as absurd and foolish, and quite contrary to those rules *ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας*, of human wisdom, of bare reason, whereby he judges of the truth or falshood of things.

2dly, That which follows farther from hence, is that these truths thus Revealed, are matters of great importance and high consequence; otherwise the Gospel were not to be so highly valued, nor ought the Ministers of it so mightily to magnify themselves and their Ministry upon this account. Sure the Son of God would never have come out of the bosom of the Father, and discovered what lay hid there; nor the spirit of God have searched for these deep things, except they had bin matters of great weight and moment, and the revelation of them of great and high importance to the world. And therefore we find the Scriptures laying a great stress upon these matters, representing them under such Characters, and with such high Elogies, that it is plain, they expected we should entertain these sublime truths, with great reverence, attention, and esteem, that they should be received with all thankfulness, and accounted by us worthy of all acception.

expiation: or in one word which will comprehend all this, that we should believe them. Which leads me to consider what these holy writings say of the *Act of Faith*, as well as what we have already heard, they have said of the *Object and Articles of it*.

And here we shall find that they lay a great stress upon the *Grace of Faith*, and especially as it hath Christ for its object, which is the great duty of the Gospel; recommended to us so often and so earnestly by our blessed Savior, that one would think, there should be no room left for doubt in this affair, by any who own the name of Christ, and are therefore willing to govern their judgment, and regulate their apprehensions concerning the *usefulness or necessity* of things, by the sentence of their Savior. Now he hath assured us more than once, that our *happiness or ruine* depends upon our having or wanting this Grace. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*, Jo. 3. 36. In imitation of the *Serpent which Moses lift up in the wilderness*, our Savior tells us that *he was to be lifted up upon the Cross*, that whosoever looks up to him by the eye of Faith, *whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life*, verse 15. God sent his son into the world for the salvation of it, but that the end of his coming may be accomplished in us, this Grace is absolutely requisite, that thereby we may be entitled to those benefits which he has purchased for us by his coming. *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life*, v. 16. and again in the 18. verse, *He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already*. Thus our Savior delivered himself when he preached to men in his own person while he was in the world; and when he was to leave it, the like commission he gave to his Apostles, and required them to publish the same doctrine: *Go into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*, Mark 16. 15, 16. They were to proclaim the glad tidings of Salvation to all mankind, and were wital to inform them of the great condition required on their parts to make them capable of it, which was Faith. And

endeavors of recommending our selves to their favor. Lastly our doctrines they say, are highly pernicious and mischievous: for hereby, if we believe one of our adversaries', the purity of the Gospel is corrupted, which consists in the plainness and simplicity of it; and the beauty of it is concealed by this disguise of mystery which is put upon it. Secondly, They give Encouragement to a wicked life, and are directly inconsistent with piety towards God, as they are with reason and natural knowledge. Thirdly, They are the great incendiaries of the world, disturbing the peace of the Christian Church which hereby hath bin crumbled into innumerable parties and factions. Fourthly, They are partly the necessary causes, and partly the unhappy occasions of divers hurtful errors and heresies, and particularly of those which compose the body of Popery. Lastly, By their absurdity and impossibility, they have given a check to the progress of the Gospel, have hindered the conversion of Jews and Mahometans, and serve only to propagate Deism and Atheism with which the age is infected, and which is in great measure owing to the absurd corruptions of the true religion, by these additions which have bin made to it by injudicious and fanciful men.

Thus doth this great champion of infidelity come forth like another Goliath, bidding defiance to our religion, railing at it and the professors of it, in the most reviling and contumelious language, and thereby endeavoring to expose both the one and the other, to the contempt and laughter of Buffoons and Atheists. Now if we farther enquire into the Reasons and Causes of these errors, and by what means such opinions, so dishonorable to God, so repugnant to common sense and reason, so pernicious and absurd, in which folly and impiety seem to strive for the preeminence, should universally prevail in the Christian Church, they instance in these following.

And first, they tell us this is owing to ignorance, and the mistakes of unskilful and injudicious men; but these mistakes have yet received a wonderful improvement by that curiosity and wantonness of fancy which is to be observed in some persons; but above all, by that regard and fondness which men have had for

It is time now we should enquire what the Socinians affirm of both these matters. And first what they say of the *doctrines* or *objects* of our faith. And here in general, they tell us that there are no doctrines delivered in the Scriptures, and proposed to our belief, which surpass the reach and comprehension of human reason: and therefore that those *Articles of faith* which have bin embraced by the Christian Church, and received under the notion of *sublime and mysterious truths*, are all of them false, erroneous, foolish and absurd, and many of them pernicious and impious fables. Let us consider them under each of these characters.

First, they say they are *false*, as being opposite to the plain dictates of reason, whereby we ought to judge of the truth or falshood of things. And such are the doctrines of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, and *satisfaction* of our blessed Savior; which are, say they, not only *above* the conceptions of men, but directly *contrary* to them; and indeed are not only repugnant to reason, but likewise to the common sense of mankind. So that in short, what we call a mysterious truth, is nothing else but mystical nonsense; and what we magnify in these matters as the result of divine wisdom, is really and truly the product of ignorance and mistake.

From hence it must follow, that they are not only false, but likewise in the second place *foolish and absurd*: scarce any thing can be invented that is more ridiculous than these doctrines, which are only the wild and extravagant notions of some phantastick persons, which equal all the fictions of poetry; none of which are more exorbitant; but most of them far less harmful than these absurd and monstrous opinions. In short, those hard

1 Nihil credi potest, quod à ratione capi & intelligi non potest; & quicquid nobis revelatum est, quicquid à nobis credi debet, id nequaquam rationis captum excedit. Ea quæ nobis ad credendum vere sunt proposita, negamus esse mysteria, quæ scilicet captum rationis superent, & communem naturæ cursum, & ordinariam rerum indolem superent, Schlichting. contra Meissn. p. 124.

2 Socin. libell. Suaf. cap. 4. Jam quod attinet ad communem sensum, nemo est tam stolidus, qui non videat pugnare hæc inter se, illum Deum nostrum esse unum numero, & tamen tres esse, quorum unusquisque sit ille Deus noster.

without the help of some other more lasting, and more culpable causes, than either *ignorance, curiosity, wantonness of phansy*, or the like.

And therefore in the 2d place they tell us, that this ignorance of divine truths, and the dangerous errors which succeeded thereupon, were owing to a general wickedness & corruption of manners, which, it seems, overspread the face of the Church, and overtook the professors of it very early; it should seem in, or very near the Apostles times: and then it is no wonder if this wickedness, by its own natural force should pervert the understandings of men, and by degrees help to corrupt their principles. To which we may add, if this were so, that God, as a just reward of an universal impiety, might give men up to these frantick delusions; to *believe a lye*, and then to publish it to the world.

The 2 Gospel and the words of it could not possibly lead men into such mistakes, because it is most evident, plain and intelligible to every man: and the Scriptures are so open and clear in these matters, *ut nemo qui eas non intelligat, non plane stupidus esse videatur*, saith Socin. Therefore it must follow that it must be owing, partly to mens ignorance and stupidity, but chiefly to their wickedness, and in particular to the *love of the world*, which is the root of almost all that evil that is in it.

1 *Nec Christus virtute caret, nec Christiana fides incertis scripturis nixa est, sed ipsorum hominum culpa fit, quo minus, ea quæ clarissime & constantissime scripta sunt, illi intelligent. Qui si tales fuerint quales esse debeant, profecto omnia intelligent in sacris voluminibus contenta, quæ eos intelligere necesse est: sin minus, æquum est ut suæ malitiæ banc etiam penam subeant, ut salutaria dogmata divinis liberis comprehensa minime percipiant, aut olim percepta non amplius teneant.* Fausti Socin. Resp. ad Scrupulos, ab excellenti quodam viro propositos, p. 329. *Malos plerosque omnes post Apostolorum tempora fuisse, nihil prohibet: quod tamen ego non assero, quamvis Apostoli & Christus ipse tale quippiam prædixisse videantur, ibid Resp ad 3. Scrup.*

2 *Quod autem adjungitur de scripturis vafre & contorte à Deo de sui cognitione proditis, si sententia nostra præcisè illis incognita fuisset, supra refutatur. Hæc tantum addo, quamvis sacræ Scripturæ in hac ipsa parte de qua quæritur, ita apertæ atque expeditæ sint, ut nemo qui eas non intelligat plane stupidus non videatur; tamen eorum verborum præmissis nos debere quæ scripta sunt ad finem libri Osæ Prophetæ, quis sapiens & intelligit ista, intelligens & sciet hæc: quia rectæ viæ Domini, & iusti ambulabunt in eis, prævaricatores vero corruent. Quæ verba ejusmodi sunt, ut ad ipsam verborum Dei intelligentiam omnino accommodari queant, quæ videlicet obvia sit piis, impiis non item.* Id. Resp. ad 6. Scrup.

But

But that you may not make a wrong judgment in this affair, and the innocent thereby be mistaken for the criminals; you must know that this immoderate love of wealth and riches, first seized the Priests; who in all ages (as these our worthy friends tell the world) have bin a company of crafty and designing men: and in order to procure a reputation to their persons and functions, and then to compass the ends of their ambition and covetousness; first contrived these mysterious doctrines, which they published in a barbarous and an unknown language, thereby keeping the people in awe; and then taking advantage of those fears and that superstition, which by these means they wrought in their minds, they lead them where they would, and managed both their *Consciences* and *Estates* just as they pleased. * And as at first these were the persons who introduced these mysterious

1 By the means of Mystery Divines have made Religion a very difficult thing, 'tis an Art which Christians are not able to understand. Thereby they have raised themselves above common Christians, and are made necessary to the people, improving that art to their own benefit, Discourse of Myst. p. 13.

2 The Learned, if you speak of such as are Priests or Ministers and Beneficed men, have such a byass given to their minds by the awe of their Superiors to whom they are accountable, by the fears of deprivation, by their Subscriptions to the Articles of their several Churches, that it may be said their Learning gives no authority to their Opinions. 'Tis plain enough that their Opinions are such, as the conditions and terms of Preferment do require of them. While men are Shackled by early Subscriptions, hopes of Preferment, fears of Punishment, and the like restraints, they are fitter to support the Kingdom of darkness and error, than to receive the true light and genuine Gospel of Christ. An Exhort. to a Free and Impartial enquiry into the Doctrines of Rel. p. 3. Neither is L. M. alone, but there are many others who believe their Paradoxes no more than we, but they subdue first their Consciences, and afterwards their minds to the Sophistries usually alledged to prove them, so long as Holy Mother (which can dispose of their fortunes in the World,) recommends this belief as the condition of holding a Parsonage or a Vicarage, or of getting a Deanery or Prebend. But after all that Reverence which any pretend to have for this Holy Mother, 'tis certain there is nothing really meant by our Holy Mother the Church, but only the strongest side, or the prevailing party. And all the mighty Complements men use to this blessed Mother, are nothing else but their wit or their fears. They find themselves the slaves of an usurping faction in the Church, which is able to constrain them to do any thing, tho never so contradictory or absurd: therefore the witty presently list themselves of the party, and call themselves Sons and Children, and subscribe and swear to all that she propounds. In others their dread and awe turns into real reverence, or rather superstition: but they do not reflect on the causes that first byassed their minds to this obedience; but those causes were originally nothing else but the power and wealth of the Holy Mother, that is as was said, of the strongest side. Answer to Mr. L. Milburne.

doctrines

doctrines into our Religion, for their own advantage; so the same secular motives prevail with most now adays to retain them. They are our preferments which help to keep up the belief of these mysteries, and if it were not for the bias which is given to our minds by the awe of our Superiors, and the fears of losing our promotions which keep us in order, we should soon discover our true sentiments, and all presently turn Socinians. For if men quit their opinions, they must at the same time lose their preferments, which are, say they, the main support of all this superstructure, which otherwise of it self would soon fall to the ground.

So that at this rate, the Superior and Inferior orders of Priests are a company of profligate and irreligious wretches; who have lost all honor and all honesty; the one *Imposing*, and the other *Submitting* to their Impositions, against their Consciences, and contrary to their judgments, only to compass their designs, and to secure their preferments. Upon this account, one of them plainly tells the world, that he knows no reason why we may not be reputed *Atheists*: for our Religion as to what concerns the Priests and Learned men among us, is all *contrivance and imposture*, a cheat as gross and palpable as was that carried on of old by the *Augurs* and *Aruuspices*; and therefore he wonders how we can be such stark fools, or errant knaves, that when we meet we can carry a grave look, and not laugh at one another. Tho by the by, if a man might be allowed to guess at this Gentleman's modesty by his writings, if one of his friends, for some particular reason, should smile in his face, I am apt to think he would scarce put him out of countenance.

Lastly, it may yet reasonably be imagined, that the causes above mentioned, tho they might go a great way in order to corrupt our Religion: yet could not be so universally prevalent and for so many Ages: were it not for some higher and greater force. The awe of Superiors, the fears of deprivation, the hopes of preferment, may be great restraints: but one would think the evidence of truth, and the importance of it, should likewise have some influence on the minds of men, and have enabled

them long before this, to have broke thro those restraints, had not some more potent, but invisible chains, fettered their understandings, and totally deprived them of their liberty. This mighty force then that prevails above sense and reason, revelation and Scriptures, can be nothing less than *Magick and Enchantment*, whereby the eies of the simple are dazled, being bewitched, as they tell us, *into a belief of the most odd things with a charm of words*. So that like men in a trance, they shall have their eies open, and yet not be able to discern the ridiculousness of those opinions which are imposed on their understandings. The Devil was the first, as they tell us, who invented sundry of those Doctrines: and sure one would think, he was the person likewise who first invented the word *Mystery*, which is an *affrighting, astonishing* word, the mention of it is enough to make men start. It is as bad as *Abrahas* or *Abacadabra*: it carries along with it charm and incantation: and the generality of Christians

1 *Mystery is a supplement ready at hand, when we fall short of reason. In a word, Mystery is a salve for all diseases, it dazles the eies of simple people, or rather bewitches them in so great a measure, that by seeing they perceive not the ridiculousness of those opinions imposed on their belief; and it makes wise men willing to shut them: for they do not love to be disturbed in the enjoyment of their temporal advantages, and they are afraid of Socrates his fate. Discourse of the word Mystery p. 19. In Religion men take care to adorn the most monstrous opinions; they look upon them as the beloved part and the chief of their Religion: and lest they should be attacked in that weak place, they fence it with the name of Mystery. They will allow no body to touch them, nor to cast their eies upon them. He that undertakes to attack an Orthodox that way, is looked upon as one who designs the utter ruine of Religion. They are so far in the right, seeing they cannot otherwise defend their Opinions, than by frightening Children with the Wolf's skin. Ibid. p. 4. The word and Sacraments are a sort of means that act not by any natural energy of their own; nor by any harmony, suitableness or agreeableness to our powers faculties or natures; but by a Theurgical, Telestick and Mystical operation, which is to say they work on our minds as Spells, Charms and Incantations. Let a man in black sprinkle you with some of the Churches water, or give you a bit of bread, or sup of wine, over which he hath pronounced the wonder-working words prescribed in Mother Churches Ritual, tho by nature you are as bad as the Devil, you shall be qualify'd for Heaven. And this no less certainly than by tying the Norman knot, you may gain the love of the person you desire; or by other devices recorded in the learned books of Magick, you may cause hatred, raise winds, and do a thousand other feats. Therefore when St. Austin defined a Sacrament to be the Outward visible sign of an Inward Spiritual grace; the good Father should have considered, that this is the definition of a Charm, not of a Gospel Sacrament. Trinitarian Schem of Rel. p. 24.*

sure must have some sorcery and witchcraft practised upon their understandings, or else they could never be so unaccountably infatuated, as with this word, and by the help of it, to embrace so many wild and such frantick opinions.

By this time I am afraid I have surfeited the Reader, I am sure I have tyred my self, with the repetition of this *nauseous* and *unfavorable* stuffe, which these our adversaries with equal falsehood and impudence, disgorge against our holy Religion and the professors of it. But I have done it for the sake of such who wanting time and leisure to peruse their writings, may here at one view inform themselves of those *calumnies* which ly dispersed and scattered in their writings, which with great assurance are almost every day published by them. And there are two reasons which have principally induced me to it, which I think are of some consideration in this affair.

The first is, that I may undeceive the Reader, and rectify those mistakes which otherwise he may, or perhaps hath bin lead into, by that unwary and indeed unjust account which hath bin given of our Adversaries and their polemical performances; which sometimes have bin recommended to the world, under the highest characters of *prudence, temper, modesty, gravity*, together with I know not how many other goodly epithets which have bin but too liberally bestowed on them. They are said, to have kept within the bounds of decency, to have argued closely and clearly without heat and passion, to have confuted their Adversaries opinions, without railing at their persons. They stand closely upon their guard, warily defend themselves, without giving advantage to their enemies by any loose and unwarrantable expressions, which *passion* is apt to suggest when *reason and sound Argument* is wanting; and in one word, they are said to have set a pattern of writing Controversies to the world.

If this be so, and that we can reconcile this character with those expressions which have now bin cited out of their books; then I think we have lost all distinction between *modesty and arrogance, rudeness and decency, truth and calumny*. For I will defy any man of the greatest wit, in conjunction with the greatest

malice,

malice, to forge and utter any thing against us and our Religion, nay tho the Devil himself were at the elbow of the writer, which can exceed what these men charge us with, in point of *falsehood and virulence*. One of the heaviest charges which was of old drawn up against the Christians, and laid at their doors, was, that in their assemblies they were wont to murder an Infant, and out of sport and wantonness to drink up his blood; so that their *Love-feasts*, as they called them, were indeed nothing else but so many *Thyestean banquets*.

But if what our adversaries affirm of us and our Religion be true, we doe much worse: for what those men might be supposed to do out of *frenzy and distraction*, (for who but frantick and wild people would be guilty of such lewd pranks?) the Guides of the Church have done out of *contrivance and design*; who have bin engaged in a wicked combination for about sixteen ages, to delude and cheat the world, and that in a matter of highest consequence, relating to the *honor of God*, and the *Salvation of mens Souls*, which they have disregarded in comparison of their own interest, and secular designs.

For what proportion do the lives of a few Infants bear to the Souls of so many millions, whom the Christian Doctors, by infusing so many loose and impious opinions into the minds of their followers, have, *as far as in them lay*, led to eternal perdition? For tho these opinions in themselves, should not *absolutely and inevitably* occasion the ruine of those who embrace them; yet they bring them, as our adversaries tell the world, into great hazard, being mighty obstacles to mens happiness, and do very naturally and easily turn them out of the way which leads to eternal life. And if so, then we cannot but conclude,

1 Præterea errores quidam in ea (Religione scil. Evangelica dicta) sunt, qui licet per se ipsi æternam salutem non adimant, tamen vel quia circa res maximi momenti versantur, vel aliam quampiam ob causam, facile impediunt, quo minus quis æternæ salutis viam recte aut norit, aut certe teneat, Socin. Lib. Suaf. Proem.

Kidemus non paucos errores circa istorum trium sententiam, non necessario impedire, quo minus quis Deo ac Christo confidat. Ex altera parte non dubitamus, quin id facile efficere possint: obscurata videlicet per errores ipsos & in aliam formam versa ratione, qua nobis divinitus æterna salus contingit, Idem ibid. cap. 4. Sect. 3.

that the Guides and *Fathers* of the Church (as they have hitherto bin accounted) having shaken off all *paternal care*, and indeed *natural affection*, have turned worse than Scythians and Canibals; by how much it is a greater and more barbarous piece of cruelty to *destroy mens Souls*, than it is to prey upon, and *devour their bodies*.

Perhaps it will be said, that this charge, and those scandalous epithets before mentioned, are chiefly managed, and made use of by the *English Unitarians*, who being a rout of profligate and irreligious wretches; together with all regard for Religion, have shaken off all reverence and respect for men.

Ans. Whether they deserve this severe censure, is more than I can tell. It is true, the Libertines and looser persons of the age, with great satisfaction peruse their books, and very greedily swallow the opinions contained in them. But as for the writers and managers of these controversies, they may, for ought I know, be persons of as strict morals, and of as great *justice and probity* as their forefathers, the *ancient and foreign Socinians*. But be that matter as it will, this I may make bold to aver, that the foreigners have spoke as hard words, and made as severe reflections upon us and our Religion, as most of the Moderns; who have but written after the Copy which the former have set them; and from whom they seeme to have borrowed a great part of *their language*, as well as their *Opinions*.

Thus, as hath formerly bin observed, the Holy Trinity hath bin stiled by them *Triceps Cerberus, monstrum triforme*; a three-

1. Nos Christo ejusque discipulis majorem fidem adjungimus, quam vanis atque impiis fanaticorum hominum commentis (de patribus loquitur) qui humanarum scientiarum cognitione inflati ac tumentes, ea excogitarunt, quæ totum salutis nostræ fundamentum, quantum in ipsis quidem fuit, funditus everterent. Andr. Dudith. Epist. ad Theod. Bezaum. inter opera Socin. p. 525.

Hic sane astutum Satanae inventum liceat admirari, qui quum animadverteret, non posse consistere regnum suum, si debitus sacris Scripturis honor relinqueretur, persuasit hominibus sacram scripturam ita esse difficilem, ut ex ea salutis cognitio constare nobis non possit. Sic perfecit, ut verbo Dei seposito, aut penitus abjecto, major jam Patrum Commentis & additamentis, qui tamen mali viciii veri dei possint, quam ipsis veritatis magistris auctoris à servis Antichristi tribuatur. Id. ibid.



headed Cerberus, and a three-faced mishapen Monster; the Incarnation of our Blessed Savior, is accounted an *idle senseless fable*; the Doctrine of Original Sin, such an other *old wives tale*, invented by the *Jews*, and imposed on the Church by *Antichrist*; the redemption of the world by the death and sufferings of our Savior, is reproached as a *pernicious, monstrous, impious, blasphemous Opinion*; the Divinity of Christ, and his eternal generation is accounted by *Wolzogen*. ¹ *an idle dream, a fable, a figment*, nay monstrous commentum, a monstrous figment of Heathenish extraction, which the ancient Fathers learnt in the Schoole of *Plato*, and from thence introduced it into the Christian Religion. - And yet that is a mild reflection in comparison of what he saith upon the same occasion; *viz.* that it is one of those false doctrines which by the cunning ² and contrivance of *the Devil* have crept into the Church. And indeed it is no wonder it should have such an infamous original, if what he tells us of it be true: for he saith, it is *nefanda sententia*, an execrable opinion, joined with the highest diminution of the glory of Christ, who is hereby denyed to be the Messiah, and the true Son of God.

You must know therefore, that this *eternal Son* of whom we dream, is only the *scilicetitious* ³ and imaginary offspring of mens brain:

¹ *Hic vero non possumus præterire, quin admirationi lectorum exponamus, Monstrum quoddam commentum, quod veteres Patres primitus ex ethnica Platonis schola in religionem Christianam introduxerunt, &c. Sed ut modo dictum Somnium de essentiali verbo Dei melius percipiatur, &c. Wolzogen. Prolegom. in Evang. Johan. Cap. 6. Sana ratio judicat, magnum scil. illud mysterium de origine & essentia filii Dei, falsum esse & merum humani cerebri figmentum. Recto ratio diffat, eos qui fabulam istam credunt, vel nescire quid credant, vel in labyrintho inextricabili, cuius nullus sit exitus, versari. Id. ibid.*

² *Hoc loco tacito pede prætereundum non est sed paucis delibandum, quomodo factum sit Satanae astutia ac stratagemate, ut falsa dogmata de persona Domini Jesu, in Christianis Ecclesiis sensim, & quasi gradatim irrepererint, &c. Id. in Proleg. cap. 3. Atque hæc nefanda & cum summa diminutione divinæ gloriæ domini Jesu conjuncta sententia, est illa ipsa quæ hodie in Christiano orbe passim obtinuit ac regnat, quæ si illius vim ac rem ipsam spectes, revera negat Jesum esse filium Dei.*

³ *Hæc est doctrina per quam Satanais Hominem Jesum, de solio divinæ majestatis ejus in animis hominum deturbavit, aliumque in eo reposuit, qui nunquam in verum naturæ exitit; secundam scil. Trinitatis personam, & fictum quendam Dei filium, qui ab æterno (id est nunquam) ex essentia Dei (qui neque gignere nec parere potest) genitus sit. Ibid.*

who

who never had any being in nature, only exists in the fancies and imaginations *curiosorum hominum*, of some conceited and whimsical persons. Nothing in nature, nothing in scriptures could possibly suggest any such notion to the minds of men. It is true, the first chapt. of St. *John* is quoted upon this occasion and to this purpose; but he ventures to assure us, that no man ¹ in *his right wits*, could possibly find out the Eternity and the Divinity of Christ in that place: And yet all the Christian Interpreters did find out, as they thought, these doctrines there. But these Commentators before *Socinus*, *delirabant omnes*, raved and talked like mad men, or men in a feavor, as an English *Socinian* words it. Farther, as this opinion concerning the Divinity of Christ, is detestable in its own nature, so is it extremely pernicious in its consequences: for by this stratagem, as the same *Wolzen.* tells us, the Devil, who first invented it, hath very notably and effectually compassed his design, ² and gained his point. For hereby he hath, if we believe this our adversary, banished all saving faith out of the world; and with it all the comfort of a Christian, and all our hopes of happiness which are hereby intirely subverted.

In short, do the modern Unitarians, say that the Articles of our faith, corrupt the purity and simplicity of the Gospel, and give encouragement to a wicked life? so do the ³ Ancient and foreign *Socinians*. Do the former say, that they retard the progress of the Gospel, and hinder the conversion of Jews and Mahometans? so do ⁴ the latter. Do the former say, that the love
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¹ *Verum quis homo sane mentis tantam vim in his verbis, in principio, posset odorari, & rem tam gravem atque incomprehensibilem ex iis elicere?* Id. cap. 5.

² *Hæc est doctrina per quam Satanas attigit scopum suum. Hacque ratione vera fides falsificata, quæ vincit mandam, penitus sublata est; ac omne nostrum solatium ac spes in lubrico posita est.* Id. cap. 3.

³ *In Evangelicorum religione quadam concedi, quæ cum Christi præceptis pugnant. Atque non paucos esse errores, qui facile veram salutis æternæ viam obscurant, atque impediunt.* Socin. Lib. Sæc. Cap. 3. &c.

⁴ *Vos illi estis qui suæ tropis, & præsertim siue illa vestra Idiomatum communicatio, nihil firme explicare potestis; & per ipsos tropos eas de Deo Christoque opiniones in Ecclesiam inieceritis, quæ sanctissimam religionem nostram & Judæis, & Mahometanis omnibus deridendam exponunt.* Socin. ad Parenesein Volani Reip. p. 381.

Itaque

of the world beguiles us, and that we are bewitched with a charm of words? so do the latter, who ascribe all our ignorance of divine truths, sometimes to an inordinate love of the world, and sometimes to stupidity and fascination. It being a very common expression with these men to say, that we are *occacati, & fascinati præjudicatis opinionibus*; blinded and bewitched with prejudices. These, together with the imputations of *stupidity, insatiation, madness, blasphemy*, are the decent epithets which they bestow upon the living, these the flowers with which they adorn the memories, and which they cast upon the graves of the dead. But to proceed: By what hath bin said, it should seem that the imaginations of

que a vobis omnino, vestrisque non sanis verbis Dei interpretationibus, tantæ in Dei Ecclesia vastitatis sive causæ sive occasio profecta est. De ortu & progressu Religionis Mathematicæ Loquitur. Ibid.

Quæ omnia cum non solum sacris literis aduersentur, verum etiam sibi ipsis non consentiunt, immo cum ridicula magna ex parte appareant, efficitur pro dolor, ut Jesu Christi religio sacratissima & divinissima, & Judæis, & Turcæ, & exteris denique omnibus maxime sit Ludibrio. Id. in Prolegom. ad Explic. Cap. 1. Johaa.

1 Nihil præterea absurdius excogitari potest (cui quidem tota reclamât natura) quam ut tres sint unus, &c. Ex qua opinione innumera portentia oriri necesse est longe absurdissima, unde sacra Divinaque Oracula plane subvertantur; ita tamen nescio quo pacto Christianorum vulgus fascinatum fuit, vel ita stupidum est, ut omnia hæc non modo constanter credat, verum etiam ab hac fide salutem suam omnino pendere existimet, & sibi ipsis homines illudentes atque imponentes, quod vident, se non videre; quod autem non vident, se videre penitus sunt persuasi. Id. v. 14. ejusdem Cap.

Tamen quia gustatum tuum ita depravatum, atque ut ita dicam, Papeis Opinionibus infatuatum esse video, ut nihil tibi jam propemodum sapiat, quod à Cænosis istis Læconis haustum non sit (de Patrum scriptis loquitur) tuum tibi Augustinum præferam, cujus tantam doctrinæ & sanctitatis opinionem Satanas inseruit in animos hominum, ut major ejus quam Christi doctrinæ fides passim habeatur. Nam quum alia multa plane ab Evangelio abhorrentia, tum hæc de Triplici Deo extaticam phantasiam, ex ipsius potentissimum commentariorum penu depromserunt, qui Scholastici Theologi nominantur. Ex hoc nimirum vino biberunt illi primi, deinde reliquis quoque gentes temulenti isti inebriarunt, ita quidem, ut jam, quod ebriis accidere solet, pro uno tres, aut etiam plures, perturbata visione aspiciant. And. Dudith. Epist. prius citata ad Theod. Bezam. inter opera Socini p. 525.

If what Dudithius here affirms of St. Austin and the Schoole-men be true, I cannot much wonder at the account, which some of the modern Unitarians give of *Athenasius*, who tell us that he was Drunk when he composed his Creed. For thereby it might happen to him, as it doth to other intoxicated persons, who behold all objects double or treble: so he, I say, while he was under this disorder might think he beheld *pro uno, duos vel tres Deos*, two or three Gods instead of one, and accordingly put them into the Confession of his Faith.

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men tho never so roving and extravagant, could never have pickt up such wild notions, as have prevailed among Christians, had not the ¹ Devil come in to their assistance; who was at the elbow of the Learned and leading men when they wrote their *Commentaries*; (or their *Comments* rather, as these men would have it believed) on the Bible. Lastly do the Moderns say, that our opinions directly lead men to Atheism? so say the elder and forreign ² Unitarians. I know not what can be said, or thought worfe of any men or any opinions than this.

But yet I must confess there is some difference still between our Ancient and modern Adversaries. For the latter have bin more assuming and arrogant in their writings, whilst the others have put on the semblance of modesty and seriousness. The one have ridiculed our Religion, whilst the other have with great gravity *blasphemed it*. The one have bin *humorose and pleasant*, endeavoring the diversion and entertainment of their Readers; whilst the others are more serious, and seem to be *in good earnest* in their reproaches of us. In short, the Moderns have endeavored to expose our Religion to *contempt and derision*, whilst the Foreigners labor to create in the minds of men, an *abhorrence and detestation* of it.

But tho they have taken different ways, yet they both agree

¹ Et licet hoc ipse (Johannes scilicet) apertissimis verbis utendo optime præstiterit, non destitit tamen nobis & veritati adversarius, Satan, quoad hominibus persuasit, vocem *ipsum*, non fuit, sed factum est hoc loco significare: atque effect ut quod validissimum semper Argumentum fuisset ad errores hosce Platonicos ex Christi Ecclesia exterminandos, omnis fallacia potissimum fundamentum extiterit. Socin. Explic. 1. Cap. Johan. v. 14.

By this it should seem, that as *Hermolaus Barbarus* was said to have consulted the Devil for the signification of the word *innixus*: so the Christian Interpreters either consulted him in interpreting and translating the word *ipsum*; or else he of his own accord, over officiously lent them his assistance, and persuaded them to render the word above named, not *was flesh*, as they should have done, but *was made flesh*.

² Opinionem istam de uno & trino Deo, non solum falsam, sed & periculosam admodum esse censemus, quippe quæ & de uno vero Deo fidem labefactare possit, & totam salutis nostræ per Christum rationem pervertere; atque idcirco quam maxime possumus eam ex omnium mentibus evulsam cupimus, & porro pro viribus curamus. Socin. Def. Animadvers. in assertionibus Theol. Collegii Polman. de trino & uno Deo. p. 634.

Dicimus nullum graviorem, contra fidem de uno vero Deo, ab Antichristi spiritu errorem in Christi Ecclesiam fuisse introductum, quam error Trinitatis personarum in una Dei essentia. Ibid.

in one common end, and have bin but too successful in attaining it, *viz.* The weakening that esteem and reputation in which our Religion formerly was held, and which it always deserves, in the world. For the reproaches which these men have cast upon us, have bin greedily pickt up by the *loose and the Libertines* of the Age, and are with great satisfaction, indeed with a kind of triumph bandyed among them in their clubs and meetings. And the pernicious effects of this are every day too visible, insomuch that we find some *ridiculing* the mysteries of our Faith, others with great vehemence *opposing* them; and a strange *indifference* hath diffused it self among divers others; who tho they have not forsaken the profession of the Faith, yet have in great measure shaken off the reverence and concern which they should have for it: so that they are *Tenacious* (if I may be allowed to use that word in the sense as some have taken and rendered it), do as it were in *procinctu stare*, being in a very good disposition and forwardness, ready to receive any Religion either *with, or without Creeds*, with or without *Sacraments* and a *Ministry*, if that can be called Religion, where these are wanting.

Upon the whole, for my own part, I am of opinion, that *Celsus*, and *Porphyrie*, and *Julian* may as well be proposed for decent patterns of writing, as these our Adversaries: for there is no expression so rash, no calumnies so virulent, no language so rude and boisterous, which they do not make use of upon this occasion, in order to defame our Religion, and discredit the professors and maintainers of it. Neither is it enough to say, what sometimes is offered in excuse of them, *viz.* that they do not rail against *persons*, but *opinions*: that they shew a respect to their *Adversaries* at the same time that they thus warmly condemn their *errors*.

For first, though it should be allowed, which is not always true, that they do not revile their particular adversaries when they write against them, yet they speak very opprobriously of Christians in general, and of the Doctors and Fathers of the Church; in which they have bin but too much imitated by the *Remonstrants*. And this I think is more criminal; forasmuch as the reputation of bodies and communities of men, is more

sacred,

sacred, and ought therefore to be had in greater regard than that of particular persons.

But *2dly*, (which is a consideration of infinitely greater weight in this case) it ought to be remembred, and our Adversaries can never be too often charged with it: that tho they should really observe that good temper in their writings, as never to use the least disrespectful expression towards any man; yet they can never be excused for those *blasphemous expressions*, which with great boldness and impiety are uttered by them 'against the *blessed and adorable Trinity*; which they call a false and portentous figment, and the belief of it, they say, hath bin the unhappy occasion of many other most absurd and monstrous opinions, which have prevailed in the Christian Church. *Against the eternal son of God*, the great and blessed Savior of mankind, whom we and all the whole Christian world worship, they utter many contumelious expressions, with relation both to his person and his offices; denying his Divinity, undervaluing his sufferings; speaking of him in the most slight and contemptible manner, calling him *fictus quidam Deus, qui nunquam in rerum natura existit*: an imaginary God, a mere Idol, and an Idol we know is nothing in the world; to whom the Christian Church very foolishly, first ascribes a divine nature, and then with equal folly, pays divine honors to him.

And then as to the *spirit of God*, the third person in the blessed Trinity, they speak of him with yet much greater contempt; not only degrading him from his divinity, but denying his subsistence and personality: sometimes accounting him

1. And among them hear what the wise *Socius* saith, (that great pattern of Temper, Prudence, and Moderation) who passes this modest and decent Reflection upon those opinions which prevail in the Christian Church, concerning the Trinity and Incarnation, and which are accounted the main and fundamental Articles of our Religion. *Verum sperandum est, ut non secus atque portentosa illa Sophistarum de Eucharistia opinio, jam Deo auspice ita palam iraducta est, ut phorizanturque merito derideantur, atque explodant: ita monstrosa hac de Deo nostro, & Christo ejus fragmenta, quaeque hoc tempore sacrosancta & omni veneratione dignissima, praecipuaque religionis nostrae arcana esse creduntur, aliquando tandem, Deo volente, ita cunctorum oculis retineantur, & unicuique tanto sint ludibrio, ut neminem non pudeat se hisce fabulis unquam non dicam fidem adhibuisse, sed aurem accommodasse. Id. Ibid.*

only an *accident*, either a *quality*, or an *operation*; at other times in a most detestable manner, styling him a mere *vapor*! and *exhalation*; and by that Blasphemous hypothesis, giving an account of the division and distribution of his gifts and graces: here by sporting and dallying with him as Children doe with bubbles, which may be driven hither or thither with the breath of their mouths.

Now if in our discourses and writings, all undecent reflections upon our adversaries are esteemed blameworthy; how much more worthy, not only of *blame*, but of *abhorrence* and *detestation* are those rude and scurrilous expressions, which are uttered by them against these two glorious persons in the ever blessed Trinity, whose honor should be infinitely dearer to us, not only than our own mean and inconsiderable reputations, but even than our very lives. Upon these considerations, I confess, I have not without some surprize and wonder, perused certain passages of late, and heretofore published in commendation of these men; and particularly of the strength and clearness of their reasoning, of their candor and fairness, in the managements of their disputes against us. What can any man think that compares those Elogies, and these expressions transcribed out of their writings? For my own part I must profess, I cannot imagine what good end can be served by such unseasonable and extravagant commendations. On the other hand, I am sure, they do but furnish people with occasion of suspicion that their admirers, out of love and fondness to their persons, without consulting their books, have overhastily ventured to represent them to the world, under these advantageous Characters: or else men may be apt to think much worse, (which yet charity I presume will forbid them to imagine;) that they have not that due regard for the Religion which they profess, or the blessed Author of it as becomes them: both which have bin thus violently assaulted, with all the *ill arts*, and all the *ill language* which wit heightened with malice could suggest.

The second reason which induced me so largely to insist upon

1 Vid. *The first part of the Preservative* p. 63, 64.
 tra Bodley Cap. 5.

2 Vid. *Episcop. contra*

those

thoſe calumnies, and that charge which theſe men have drawn up againſt our Holy Faith, and the profeſſors of it, was, that I might hereby juſtifie the endeavors of all ſuch who either by *Preaching* or *writing*, by *Argument* or *Authority* (and Gods bleſſing reſt upon them who make uſe of their authority to ſo good a purpoſe), make it their buſineſs to oppoſe the attempts of theſe men, and to ſtop the growth of their pernicious errors, which have but too far ſpread themſelves amongſt us. For if we have any regard for the honor of God, the welfare of our Religion, or our own reputation, we have juſt reaſon to be engaged in this vindication; for all theſe ſuffer in thoſe unjuſt aſperſions which they in their writings perpetually caſt upon us.

Many things well deſerve to be ſpoken on this ſubject; which I ſhall defer at preſent, and reſerve them to be mentioned in the concluſion of this diſcourſe; only there is one thing which is fit to be inſiſted upon here, as being pertinent to my preſent deſign, and will help to make good the charge which I drew up againſt them in the beginning of this diſcourſe, viz. that hereby they do, tho not directly oppoſe, yet ſecretly undermine the authority of the Holy Scriptures; and give men juſt cauſe, if what they ſay be true, not only to ſuſpect, but plainly to deny their truth and inſpiration. For if the Articles and myſteries of our Faith are, as we ſay, *revealed in the holy Scriptures*; and if thoſe very myſteries, are, as our adverſaries ſay, ſuch *abſurd, impious, monſtrous, blaſphemous*, opinions; it muſt by a direct and neceſſary conſequence follow from hence, that the Scriptures are ſo far from having God for their Author, that no honeſt or wiſe man could be concerned in the composing and publiſhing of them.

It will be ſaid, that theſe Doctrines are not to be found in the holy Scriptures, but are rather the inventions and additions of *fanciful and injudicious* men, to ſay no worſe of them. Now how ſhall this matter be tried? We have always affirmed, that our Religion is plainly revealed in the Bible; that we found it there, and took it thence. They ſay, it is not contained in the Holy writings, and can never be proved out of them. If we refer men to the plain and expreſs words of Scripture, and bid them make uſe of their eyes, and peruſe

what is written there, and then upon a fair perusal, believe the report of their understandings in this affair: then our Adversaries tell us, that we ought not always to collect Articles of Faith, from the *Words and Letter* of the Scriptures, but from the *sense and meaning* of them; which may, and oftentimes is really very different, from what the words and letter at first view may seem to import. But how shall we be assured that this is so in this case, and that by forsaking the plain, obvious, natural construction of the words, we shall not deviate from the design and intention of the holy writers? In certain matters which are disputed between us, we say the words of Scripture are to be taken in the *literal and natural* sense: our Adversaries to avoid the evidence and conviction which arises hence, betake themselves to *Tropes and Metaphors*. How shall this matter I say be determined?

Now one would think, that the fairest proposal that can possibly be made in this case, is, that it should be referred to the arbitration of those who lived in, or next to the Age in which the Apostles and other holy writers lived, who either upon their own knowledge, or by the writings and discourses of such who conversed with the holy Pen-men, might be informed of their true sense and meaning: and consequently we, who live at this great distance from the Apostolical age, by perusing the writings of the Ancients, and finding what was their sense in these controverted points, may be able to form a judgment concerning those Doctrines, which are now generally believed and embraced among Christians; whether they really are the same with those that were at first preached by the Apostles, and entertained by their Disciples and followers.

Here we have brought this matter to a short issue, if our Adversaries would join with us upon this head. But they absolutely decline it, for this reason, that there was a general

Apostasy

1 *Quod si statim post illa tempora (scil. Apostolica) aliter de Christo publice doceri captum est, ac nos doceamus, nihil permoveamur: scientes ab Apostolis, & ab ipso*

Apostacy and defection presently after the Apostles times, from the doctrine of the Apostles, in the points which are disputed between us, and particularly in that which concerns the divinity of Christ. For this opinion, they say, was introduced into the Church by *Antichrist*, many *false Prophets and Impostors*, even in the Apostles days, going forth into the world, and seducing men into a belief of I know not what fictitious and imaginary divine nature in Christ.

Many scandalous reflections upon this occasion are by our adversaries cast upon the first and best ages of the Church, and those great men who lived in them, whose names and writings are transmitted down to us; whereby, not only the *wisdom and integrity* of the Fathers are called in question, but with them, the *Authority and Inspiration* of the holy Scriptures are dangerously shocked, and by these means brought into great doubt and uncertainty, as shall hereafter be made more largely to appear.

Well: but tho the opinions of *Fathers and Councils* ought not much to be regarded, who are said to be *parties*, and therefore ought not to be *judges* in the case; yet I hope we may with some appearance of reason appeal to other more indifferent persons, I mean *Jews and Pagans*; who tho they are infinitely prejudiced against the truth of our Religion, yet may be presumed to be competent judges of the sense and meaning of the words of Scripture, in such matters, which are as our adversaries themselves acknowledge, so plain and obvious, that none who are masters of common sense and reason; if they are not otherwise byassed, can possibly be lead into mistakes about them. Now if we consult the writings of the Ancients, as

ipso Christo tenebras istas propediem in Ecclesia futuras predictum fuisse; & ipsi Apostolis adhuc viventibus, multos Antichristos extitisse, atque multos falsos prophetas atque Impostores in mundum prodiiisse, &c. Socin. ad parænesin And. Volani Resp. p. 382.

Propterea enim ne ista tam sublimia de Homine ipso credantur, hominibus imperitis ab ipso ferme initio suggestit Satan, ut locis quibusdam divinarum literarum abutentes, & Sophisticis rationibus ac consecutionibus amixti, & sibi & aliis persuaderent, in Christo Jesu præter humanam naturam, esse divinam essentiam, &c. Idem Resp. ad præfationem Wicki p. 532.

far

far as we have any records left us of these matters; we shall find those above named enemies of Christianity, always 'charging the Christians with the belief of those doctrines, viz. concerning the *Divinity and Incarnation of our Savior*; which are now in dispute between us and the Socinians. It is true indeed, they accounted these Doctrines as the Socinians now do, *absurd and impossible*, and for that very reason, defamed the Christian Religion, and rejected the holy Scriptures in which they found that these doctrines were evidently contained. But this confirms what we are saying, that these mysteries of our Faith are plainly delivered in the Scriptures, and that all unprejudiced persons who do not look thro Socinian spectacles, did, and do still find them there.

Neither can it be here pretended, that the enemies of our

1 'Επί δ' ἰσχυροῦς ἡμῶν ἐκ οὐδ' ἡδὴ ὑπεράκει, πάλ' τὸ ἱεσὺ, ὅτι οὐ θεοῦ ἐμμελίζοι, ἵνα οὕτω ποιεῖται, ὡς ἐν τούτῳ οὐκ ἔστι δοκῶμεν. Orig. contra Cels. lib. 3. p. 135.

Christianos Carmen Christo, quasi Deo, dicere solitos, testatur Plinius Epistola 97. Lib. 10.

2 Οὗ γὰρ μαρτυροῦντες ἄλλοις Εὐαγγελίᾳ, ἐδὲ λόγους ἀποψεύδιζομεν. Οὕτω δὲ ἀνθρώπων μετὰ τὴν γένεσιν ἐκπαύσιντο. Tatianus Ora. contra Græcos.

Ο δὲ γυναικὶς Κίλεος ἀπαρτὶ θεολογίας ἐπὶ τῷ μὴ πιστεύειν τῆς τῶν ἀσφαγῶν ταύτης λόγους, ἰλοιδύμενοι αὐτὴν, εἰπὼν, ὅτι ταῦτα ἐκκατασκευασμένη ἀποδίδωκεν ἡμεῖς ἀγνοῦν, ὡς παύσαντες, ἐπὶ ταῦτα ἀλλήλα, αὐτὸ τὸ μὴ γινώσκοντες ἐκείνους αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἔχοντες δοκῶμεν. Orig. contra Cels. lib. 7. p. 338.

3 Amelius the Platonist upon his reading the first Chapter of St. John's Gospel, understood the words as we Christians now do; and found those doctrines which we contend for, viz. the Divinity, and incarnation of the word, together with the creation of the material world by him; plainly delivered there. Καὶ ἡ Δι' οὗ οὐ Βασιλεὺς αἰσίοις ἐν τῇ τοῦ ἀρχῆς; πᾶσι καὶ ἐκείνῃ κατέστηκεν αὐτῷ; Οὕτω ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἴπωμεν; Δι' οὗ καὶ πᾶσι ἀπλῶς μεμαρτυρήθη. Καὶ εἰς τὴν ἀσφαγῶν πύλιν, ἐσθῆτα ἐκκατασκευασμένη ἀποδίδωκεν αὐτοῖς. Amelius apud Euseb. de præpar. Evang. Lib. 11. Cap. 19.

And Julian the Apostate, tho he would have it believed that the Christians of aftertimes ascribed a divine nature to their Savior, without any warrant from the Apostles, and that neither Paul, nor Matthew, nor Mark, nor Luke ever called him God (which was a very false and impudent suggestion) yet from those clear and irrefragable testimonies which are to be found in St. John's Gospel, he is forced to acknowledge, that the Divinity of Christ is declared there. To which he hath nothing to reply; but being pinched with a Testimony which he could not elude, he falls a railing and blaspheming, as the Socinians use to do in the like cases.

Στασιπύρις δὲ ὡς οὐκ ὀλοῦμαι, ἡμεῖς ἐκκατασκευασμένη τῷ θεῷ δοκῶμεν τὸ καλοῦσθαι τὴν ἀσφαγῶν, ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἀσφαγῶν ἐκκατασκευασμένη ἐστίν. Apud Cyrill. Lib. 10. contra Julianum p. 333. Edit Paris.

Religion,

Religion, either thro ignorance *mistook*, or thro malice *perverted* the sense and meaning of the holy writings, in order to expose both them and our Religion to the hatred and contempt of the world. For tho they might, and very often did, very *ignorantly* and very *maliciously* object divers false things against the Faith and practice of Christians; yet no such thing can with any ground or colour be suggested in *this case*. The Bishops and Fathers of the Church, who were concerned in the vindication of their Religion, never made any such answer, *viz.* that these were calumnies and false imputations upon them and the Scriptures. No: they owned the charge; acknowledged indeed that these were *Mysteries* which reason could not comprehend, but however still that they ought to be believed, because God required our Faith, which in these matters ought to be conducted, not by the uncertain reports of bare reason, but a more sure word of Prophecy, and the light of divine revelation. But of this more hereafter.

To conclude this head: The *Socinians* sometimes tell us, as we heard before, that our doctrines concerning the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*, are the great hindrances of the propagation of the Gospel among *Pagans* and *Mahometans*; and therefore, that in order to gain *Profelytes* to our Religion, we ought to part with the *Mysteries* of our Faith, which are the great stumbling block in the way of these Infidels. But I say this alone will not be effectual to the purpose, as long as we retain the Scriptures, where these doctrines are very plainly contained; and where *Jews* and *Mahometans* will be sure to find them. Neither is it to be imagined, that in the interpretation of Scripture, they will ever be governed by the *figurative* and *sophistical* expositions of the *Socinians*, against the *plain natural*

Ι. Αποστολὴ καὶ ἀποστολῶν καὶ ἄλλων ἀποδείξεις, ὅτι οὗτοι ἱπποκρίτου
 γινώσκοντες, καὶ ἀνθρώπων γινώσκοντες. Est objectio Tryph. Resp. Justinus: 'Εἰ τὸ
 ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων διδάσκοντες ἢ ἐπ' ἱπποκρίτου ἐπιβόησαν ἀποδεικνύονται, ἀναγινώσκοντες μὴ ὡς
 ἂν εἴμεν ὑμεῖς· εἰ δὲ κατὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ τοιοῦτον ποιεῖται, πλείους αὐτὸς λέγων, ἀξίον
 ὑμῶν ἐπιγινώσκοντες αὐτὸς, οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκοντες τὸ γινώσκοντες τὸν καὶ δόγμα τὸ οὗτο γινώσκοντες.
 Just. Martyr contra Tryph. p. 292. Edit. Paris.

E

significa-

signification of the words. You may as soon prevail with them to part with their *senses*, and make them believe the words are not to be found in the Scriptures, as persuade them that the received sense and meaning is not there likewise. And therefore upon occasion, some of them have declared, that if they could but believe the truth of the writings of the *New Testament*; they would soon believe the *Divinity* of our Savior, and would adore and invoke him as God.

In short, to gain the good opinion of Infidels, and to reconcile them to our Religion, we must not only part with our Articles, but likewise turn *Traditors*, and deliver up our *Bibles*. And then perhaps, in compliance with so great and extraordinary a complement, they may receive us into their friendship.

Having thus seen what opinion the *Socinians* have of the *Doctrines and Mysteries* of our Faith: I now proceede to shew what it is that they say of the *grace* of Faith, and the act of *believing*. And here upon examination we shall find that they entertain as low, mean thoughts of the habit and grace of Faith, as they do of the objects of it. For they often tell us, that piety and a good life is the summe and abridgment of all Re-

1 Vera pietas, vitæque innocentia totam religionem complectitur. Socin. Præf. in Resp. contra Palæologum.

Ad Christi aspectabilem Ecclesiam constituendam nihil aliud requiritur quam vera cognitio præceptorum Christi. Si quis cognoscere velit ad salutem æternam adipiscendam nihil aliud requiri quam conservationem præceptorum Christi, præter multa ipsius Christi verba id aperte significantia, & alia complura ipsius Apostolorum dicta, legat Joannis primam Epist. &c. Id. Epist. 2^a ad Matth. Radecium.

Est quidem Deus & Christus fundamentum salutis nostræ, sed non quatenus eorum essentiam aut substantiam recte novimus; sed quatenus Dei voluntatem per Christum patefactam tenemus. Vita æterna est cognoscere patrem illum, qui est ille solus verus Deus & quem misit Jesum Christum. At in sacris literis Deum & Christum cognoscere non significat utriusque essentiam vel substantiam novisse, sed voluntatem, eique se obedientem præstare. Ibid.

Primum igitur interrogo, quid censes de Christi natura sive essentia nobis cognitu esse necessarium? Resp. Id ut antea dixi, sine cujus cognitione voluntas Dei erga nos per ipsum Christum patefacta à nobis vel sciri, vel servari nequeat. Interrog. Quid igitur ex his que ad Christi naturam vel essentiam pertinent ejusmodi esse censes? Resp. Vix quidquam. Id. Christi. Rel. Inst. breviss. p. 653. Inter prævistos locos id aperitissime docet divina illa Christianæ pietatis Epitome, quæ est apud Paulum, Tit. 2. 11. ubi breviter habetur, quicquid Christus ejusque Apostoli nos Dei nomine docuerunt, nihil esse aliud quam vitæ innocentiam cum spe beatæ immortalitatis conjunctam. Id. de Fide & Operibus p. 624.

ligion:

ligion; that no other knowledge of God is requisite, but that of his will and commands; that Faith, as it implies the assent of the understanding to the truths of the Gospel, is not of necessary obligation, but a kind of ornament at best, rather than a matter of real use. Admit it brings some small advantages with it, yet the want or absence of it will be attended with no great inconvenience. You may say of it, as one did of the skill or art of Poetry, *si adest, laudo, si abest, non multum vitupero*. In short, what the Apostle affirms of meats 1 Cor. 8. v. 8. may be equally verified of Faith, *It commendeth us not to God, for neither if we believe, are we the better, neither if we believe not, are we the worse: modo vitæ sanctimoniam salva sit*, provided you preserve a due regard for holyness, and live a good life.

Now any man that reads the *New Testament*, and particularly those passages above quoted out of it, wherein he will find the necessity of believing repeated so often, and mentioned so emphatically, may justly wonder, how it is possible for any one who owns the authority of the Gospel, to elude the force of them. And yet this is done by *Socinus* and his Disciples and Followers, who tell us, that by Faith in the forementioned places, is meant nothing else but *obedience* to the precepts of the Gospel; so that *Credere*, with him is, *obedire sub spe vitæ eternæ*, to yield obedience to the Laws of Christ, being animated and encouraged so to do, by the hopes and expectation of eternal Life.

Now this is contrary to the express declarations of the holy Scriptures, in which we find *Faith and Obedience* very often distinguished; as certainly they are, in all those places which make Faith the cause and principle of new obedience, as when it is said, that *Faith purifieth the Heart*, Acts 15. 9. that *it worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6. Now the cause and the effect, can never be one

1 Fide in ipsum Deum, id est, fiducia in ipso Deo collocanda, justificamur. Quæ fides obedientiam præceptorum Christi, non quidem ut effectum suum, sed ut suam substantiam & formam continet & complectitur. Socin. Notæ in Dial. de Justif. p. 610. Fidem nempe eam qua justificamur, nihil aliud esse quam Christo considerare, id quod executioni mandatur, suumque complementum & quasi formam suscipit, cum per spem vitæ eternæ Christi præceptis obedientia præstatur. Id. de Fide & Operibus. p. 626. Et alibi passim.

and the same thing; otherwise the greatest contradictions imaginable must from thence follow: As, that the same thing may be, and may not be at the same time; may be before, and after it self. In short, there is no ill consequence that can justly be charged upon *Transubstantiation*, which exceeds those, in point either of *absurdity or danger*, which are lodged in the bowels of this assertion, viz. *that good works are the formal notion of Evangelical faith.*

This renders the Apostle trifling in his exhortation, and guilty of such weakness and vanity, as were not to be excused in the most trivial Writers. *This is a faithful saying*, saith he to Titus, *and this I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works*, Tit. 3. 8. Why should the Apostle make use of such a solemn preface, and urge in so emphatical a manner, that which when examined, amounts to so mean and empty a tautology: It being as if he should have said, I require thee to charge men solemnly, and often to put them in mind of this matter of great importance, viz. that they who obey the commandments of Christ, should be sure to be obedient to them. Indeed, if he had said, I require that they who already *do good works*, should be sure to *persevere* in them; there might be room and reason for such a command and admonition. Otherwise, if faith and obedience are not to be distinguished, there could be no ground in this place for this exhortation. *I will shew thee my faith by my works*, saith St. James, 2 James 18. v. A very notable discovery indeed, if these two are but one and the same thing; viz. that a man should discover his works by his operations, and demonstrate his obedience by his conformity to the Laws of Christ. It is true indeed, a lively, and a firm faith cannot be separated from good works: but however it may, and must be distinguished from them, as the cause and principle from the Effect, the root from the branches. Otherwise we shall turn things upside down; make no account whether the foundation or building be uppermost, and thereby occasion a strange and wild confusion in the order of Nature and Religion.

I shall

I shall farther acknowledge, that faith, by a *Synecdoche*, or a *Metonymie* rather, sometimes comprehends not only the *persuasion* of the mind concerning the truths of the Gospel, but likewise all that, which by a necessity either Natural or Moral flows from it: and so it may be allowed (as our Divines have rightly stated this matter) to take within its compass the consent of the understanding, together with the affections of the mind, and those actions likewise which are consequent to a firm persuasion. Yet so, that in the first place, in its primary and most natural signification, it denotes the assent of the understanding: and therefore by no means, without great injustice; as well as absurdity, can faith be taken to signify the latter, *viz.* obedience; so as to exclude the former, which is the cause and parent of it. For *obedience* is no otherwise to be styled *faith*, but because it flows from *faith*; that is, when the truths of the Gospel make such a deep and lasting impression on the mind, as thereby to influence the life and practice.

Perhaps it will be said, that the Socinians will make no difficulty to acknowledge, that this faith or persuasion of the mind, is antecedent to obedience and the principle of it: but that they do not conceive it to be any otherwise useful or necessary, than as it respects the *Commands* of Christ, as those commands are enforced by the *promises* thereunto annexed, and the hopes and expectations which are thereby conceived of *Eternal life*. All other faith relating to the *Person* of Christ, and all other knowledge and enquiries after *his Nature*, they say, are superfluous, or as some of them have expressed it, impertinent to our Lords design.

1. *Arbitror autem ea quæ hactenus a me dicta sunt, satis esse ad demonstrandum, cur, cum de Christi fide verba sunt, fiduciam potissimum intelligam quæ in ipso Christo collocetur, id est reipsa obedientiam præceptorum ejus, sub se eorum quæ promissit: atque affirmem hanc fidem esse illam Christi fidem qua revera justificamur, non autem persuasionem illam quod Jesus sit Messias. Id. Socin. De fide & Operibus, p. 625.*

2. *Quod ad illas opiniones attinet quæ ad Christi naturam vel essentiam pertinent, vix ullæ sunt ex quibus quantumvis falsis consequatur, eum qui illas tenet non credere Jesum esse Christum. Id. Comment. in 1 Epist. Johan. cap. 5. v. 1.*

Now

Now this I say, is directly repugnant to the plain and express declarations of the holy Scriptures, which describe faith in Christ to be a firm persuasion of the truth of certain propositions concerning Christ, which are grounded upon his authority, and either respect his *Offices*, or relate to his *Person*. And this faith is required of us as a virtue highly commendable in it self, and an especial Instrument of our Salvation: it being a *necessary condition* required of us antecedently to our partaking of the benefits and priviledges which our blessed Saviour hath purchased for us. In short, we are required to believe him to be the *Christ, the son of God, the Saviour of the world*. For God did not think fit to dispense those great blessings which have been procured for us to any, but such as should own and acknowledge him *from whom* they are derived; as also by *what means* they were at first obtained, and by *which* they are still to be applied. And therefore they that thus believe, viz. *that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God*, are said to be *born of God*, 1 John 5. 1. *To dwell in God, and God in them*, 1 Joh. 4. 15. *To overcome the world*, 1 Joh. 5. 5. To be as sure of everlasting life as if they were in actual possession of it. *He that believeth on the son of God hath everlasting life*, Joh. 3. 36. On the other hand, they who do not thus believe on him, are said to *make God a liar, because they believe not the record which God gave of his son*, 1 Joh. 5. 10: who hath declared more than once by a voice from Heaven, that he was *his beloved son*. Nay, hereby they do not only dishonour God, but bring also inevitable ruine upon their own Souls; being already *under condemnation and the wrath of God abiding on them*, 3 Joh. 18. 36.

Thus we see the sense of the Scriptures concerning this matter, which all along put a great stress upon Faith, as it bespeaks the assent of the understanding, and persuasion of the mind concerning the truths of the Gospel, and particularly this great truth that *Jesus is the Son of God*. And this alone might be abundantly sufficient to convince any honest and unprejudic'd mind, not only of the *usefulness*, but likewise of the *absolute and indispensable necessity* of believing. But forasmuch as this is a matter of great importance, in which the honor of our blessed Saviour;

vior; the truth and authority of the holy writings, and particularly those of the *New Testament*; the excellence and indeed the certainty of the Christian Religion, are highly concerned: I shall farther enlarge upon this Head, and endeavour to lay before the Reader fundry of those evil and pernicious consequences, which are included in, and unavoidably follow from the contrary opinion, which makes faith either an *useless*, or at best but an *indifferent* matter.

And first I say, this opinion tends plainly to the dishonor of our blessed Savior, and to weaken that veneration which every one who is called by his name ought to have for him: To have just and right conceptions of him, being the first act of honor, and the foundation of all other expressions of homage and duty which we owe him; and therefore if we have not a true information and knowledge of him as to his *nature and essence*, it is impossible for us with any *certainty*, or with any *safety*, to pay him that adoration and service which may be claimed from us.

Upon this account, we find him in his Sermons and Discourses, making it his business to inform the people upon all occasions of his *nature, descent, and original*: always declaring that he was the *son of God*, that *God was his Father*, that he was the *Messiah*, the Savior of the World, that he *came from God*, that he was the *living bread which came down from Heaven*. Nay he doth not only bear witness of himself, but for the farther confirmation of this great truth he appeals to the Scriptures, *Joh. 5. 39. which testified of him*; to the *Miracles* which he wrought *v. 36. which proclaimed his Divinity*, and were a clear proof of the truth of all that he had averred of himselfe; to the testimony of *John Baptist v. 33. who bare witness unto this truth. For he saw the Spirit descending from Heaven and remaining on him, 1 Jo. 33.* And what he saw himself he published to others, and bare record that he was the *son of God v. 34.* Nay to place this truth above the reach of all doubt, he appeals, as to the last and greatest confirmation that could possibly be given of it, to the Testimony of his Father who sent him *v. 37. and by a voice from Heaven more then once bare witness of him, and declared that he was his well beloved Son, Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5.*

Now

Now to what purpose should our Savior take all this pains to inform his Hearers, so often to inculcate, and by so many arguments to confirm this matter, if it were not of great consequence, highly fitting to be made known, and therefore necessary to be believed? And therefore we find that he was desirous to know, if I may so say, not only what effect his *doctrine* had upon the minds of his hearers, but what opinion they had of his *person*, whom *doe men say that I the son of man am?* Mat. 16. 13. The same question he repeats to his Disciples, that they might declare their apprehensions of him, *but whom say ye that I am?* v. 15. To the man cured of his blindness Jo. 9. 35. the question that he puts to him in order to his being admitted one of his Disciples, was, *doest thou believe on the son of God?* which Faith plainly respected the *person*, and not directly or immediately the *commands of Christ*. For the answer returned, was not which be those commands, but who is that person, v. 36, *who is he, Lord that I might believe on him?* And upon this discovery made by our Savior of himself v. 37. the blind man declares his Faith and acknowledgment of him, that he was *the son of God*; and as a sign of his inward Faith, he pays his outward adoration: *Lord I believe and he worshiped him,* v. 36.

Thus, St. Thomas his Faith did not consist formally in obedience, but in the acknowledgment of Christ's person, Jo. 20. 28. *My Lord and my God*. And this persuasion of the mind, and confession of the mouth, which is the consequence and proof of the former, is not only a duty, but a duty so acceptable to God, that our Savior more than once pronounces a *blessing* to it; first here in his discourse with Thomas v. 29. *because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*. Where the word *Believe* in the Antithesis, must be taken in the same sense as it is used in the former part. Now in the former it is plain, it is used to denote the assent of the understanding; for St. Thomas his infidelity did not consist in *immorality and disobedience*, but in a *distrust* of the truth of what the Apostles had related concerning the resurrection of Christ. His faith consequently consisted in an *assent to and acknowledgment of* what he before doubted. The same blessing, and for the same reason

reason our Saviour pronounces to St. *Peter*; viz. for his glorious Confession and acknowledgement of his Divinity, Matt. 16. 17. *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.*

It is true indeed, and therefore must be acknowledged, that this perswasion of the mind, and a Confession consequent thereupon of the Divine Nature of Christ, without a *Conformity to his Laws*, will not be sufficient to recommend us to the favour of God, and to give us a title to the blessing pronounced to them who believe. But this will not overthrow the truth of what I have now asserted, viz. that faith in this sense as we now take it, is a duty highly acceptable to God, and of as necessary obligation, as is any other of the graces of Gods Spirit, tho' none of them *in separation* from the rest will give us a title to happiness. For instance: *Temperance and Chastity* are virtues highly commendable in themselves, and therefore serve to recommend us to the favour of God; but if they are found in any person, where *truth and justice* are wanting, they alone, without these latter virtues will never procure us a reward. Yet however, this will not hinder, but that these good qualities, are, as we said before, in themselves very acceptable to God, and of necessary and indispensable obligation.

The case is the very same with faith. If any man therefore should put the question from St. James, 2d. ch. 14. v. and ask, *if a man have faith, and have not works, can that faith save him?* I Ans. by no means: we may roundly and peremptorily declare that this faith, tho' it should be joined with *fiducia*, a *strong confidence*, or if you please, a *recumbency* on Christ, will not, it cannot save him. But will it therefore follow, that it is not acceptable to God, and absolutely required of us? No, this can as little be allowed as the former. That which can reasonably be collected from hence is, not that it is not *necessary*, but that it is not *the only thing* that is so. I know it will be here said, that this faith, as it is terminated in the person of Christ, doth not properly respect his *Nature*, but only or chiefly his *Offices*. So that when we are so often required in the Scriptures to *believe in Christ*, the meaning of it is, that we should believe him

to be the *Messiah*, without troubling our selves or others with any curious but needless enquiries after his *Nature and Essence*.

Ans. The Scriptures declare the contrary, that it is not sufficient to make an acknowledgement of *his Office*, without the knowledge of *his Nature*; as is evident from those places before mentioned, wherein he is declared, and we are therefore required to believe him to be *the son of God*: the writings of the New Testament, every where laying a particular stress on this phrase, and requiring of us to believe in him, in this determinate sense and notion; *viz.* That he whom we own to be our Savior, Jesus Christ, *is the son of God*.

This was that which he always averred and declared of himself. The same likewise was constantly affirmed and preached by his Apostles; firmly and universally believed by all his friends, and followers; objected against him by his enemies, and drawn up into an accusation and charge by the Jews. *We have a Law* (say they) *and by that Law he ought to dye, because he made himself the son of God*, Jo. 19. 7. Nay the very Devils proclaimed this great truth, unwillingly to be sure, but yet publickly and loudly they declared, what at the same time they trembled at the mention of, proving the Heralds of his Divinity; for *Mark* 3. 11. we are told, *that unclean Spirits when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, thou art the Son of God*.

I know it will here be replied by some, that it is true indeed, we are obliged in Scripture to confess and acknowledge our Savior to be *the Son of God*: but by this phrase is meant no more, but that we should believe him to be the *Messiah*; these being Synonymous terms, both the one and the other of them serving to denote to us, not the *nature*, but the *offices* of our blessed Savior, and particularly his office of being our King, so that to believe him to be *the son of God*, imports no more than to acknowledge him to be the *Messiah*: That is, to submit to his Authority, to own him for our Sovereign, and our selves for his Subjects; and in pursuance thereof, to promise all due submission to his Regal power, and obedience to his Laws.

This

This is a notion that was at first started by ¹ Socinus, and afterwards greedily embraced by divers others; and particularly by Mr. *Hobbes*, that great promoter of useful notions among us, both with relation to Religion, and Civil Government; from whom the Author of a late Treatise entituled, the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, might have borrowed his thoughts of this matter. Tho it must be confessed that some other persons, of a much greater and better name and note, have likewise recommended the same notion: I mean ² *Grotius* and ³ *Episcopus*, whose Authority and Learning have led divers others into the like dangerous mistake.

I Ans. therefore, that these two phrases of being the *Messiah* and the *son of God* are not equipollent phrases, nor have they therefore the same formal import and signification; the one properly denoting the *Nature*, and the other the *Offices* of our Savior. It is true indeed, they are often joyned together; but the reason why they are so joyned is, because the *nature* and the *office* did meet in the same person. He who was the *Messiah* was truly the *son of God*: and none but only he who was thus the son of God, could execute the office of the *Messiah*. But however the formal notion of these Epithets given our Savior is different, as denoting and signifying

1 Si quis diligenter inspiciat factam ad Christum à Caiapha & aliis Judæis interrogationem, an esset Dei filius, intelliget omnino, aliud nihil eos, filii Dei, & quidem singularis cujusdam filii Dei nomine intellexisse, quam Christum, &c. & postea, ex quibus constat, unicam esse interrogationem, & verba illa, ille filius Dei, fuisse adhibita, ad magis declarandam illius qui Christus sit dignitatem atque præstantiam: non ad aliquod addendum quod Christi appellatio per se non complettatur. Socin. Resp. ad Wiek. Oper. Vol. 2. p. 571. & alibi passim.

2 Vide illius Comment. in Mat. 14. v. 33. & cap. 26. v. 63.

3 Quid ergo, inquires, sibi voluerunt ista locutione, quando confitebantur Jesum esse filium Dei? Certe aliud nihil, quam Jesum esse Christum, sive Messiam aut Regem illum Israelis promissum, quem, quia Rex singularis erat, unctusque oleo letitiæ supra consortes suos, filium Dei *χρὶςτός* vocaverunt; prout patet ex eo, quod *Nathaniel* vocem illam, filii Dei, exponat, tu es Rex Israelis. Et quod confessionem illam *Petri*, tu es Christus, filius Dei vivi; *Marcus* & *Lucas* non aliter referant quam hisce verbis, Tu es Christus, & Tu es Christus ille Dei, id est, Rex ille Deo unice gratus, & Deo proximus. Episcop. Inst. Theol. Lib. 4. Cap. 34. Sect. 2. De Deo.

two different things; as will appear from these following considerations.

First, that to be the *son of God* plainly denotes the nature and essence; but to be the *Messiah*, the office of our Savior, as was said before. And this will appear from the writings of the *New Testament*, where we find these two Titles, of being the *Messiah*, and the *son of God*, very plainly distinguished: without which distinction we cannot clear the Scriptures from the imputation of needless, and sometimes absurd repetitions. For tho in some places, these phrases may seem to be so joyned together, as if they were *Equivalent*, and only *Exegetical* of each other; yet in others they are placed in such a manner of distinction, that they cannot be supposed to be of the same import, without allowing a manifest and a very impertinent Tautology.

And thus (for instance) they are distinguished in the Eunuch's answer to the question of *Philip*, Acts 8. 37. *I believe* (saith he) *that Jesus Christ is the son of God; or that the son of God is Jesus Christ* (for so the words as they stand in the Original, may be reciprocally rendred) yet in both cases, the one of these standing in the place of a *subject*, and the other of a *predicate*, they cannot denote the same thing, without supposing, that the grave and solemn profession which this new Convert made of his Faith, should consist in a ludicrous, because Identical predication: It being at this rate no other than if he should have said, *I believe that Jesus Christ is Jesus Christ*. Thus *Saul* after his Conversion, in the Synagogues at *Damascus*, is said to have *preached Christ* among the Jews that were there; and the substance of what he Preached was, that *he was the son of God*, Acts 9. 20. The like confession of his Faith was made by *St. Peter*, both for himself, and in the name of the rest of the Apostles, Jo. 6. 69. *We believe and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the son of the living God*.

Now as when the Scriptures inform us, that some believed, and others proved and demonstrated that *Jesus was the Christ*; it must from thence be evident, that to be *Jesus*, and *Christ*, must signify two distinct things; for the same thing cannot,

except very foolishly and impertinently, be affirmed, and much less be demonstrated of it self. So when the same holy writings acquaint us, that some persons in the solemn declarations of their faith, professed that *Jesus Christ was the son of God*; and that others by reason and argument, made it their business to prove and demonstrate him to be so: we ought to conceive, that to be *Jesus Christ*, and to be the *son of God*, are two phrases that import two different things: otherwise we cannot acquit those holy men who made those professions, and were engaged in that proof, from the imputation of folly and impertinence.

Once more, if these places should not be sufficient to silence the Cavils of our Adversaries, yet one would think that the words of St. *John*, ch. 20. v. 31. should put it beyond all doubt. In which the Apostle gives an account of the reason that moved and induced him to commit to writing the History of our Saviors life and actions, viz. that we might be thereby prevail'd on to believe that *Jesus is the Christ*, and not only so, but that he likewise was the *son of God*. By which phrase, it is plain that he meant to assert the divine nature and Godhead of our Savior; the proof and vindication of which, against the impious Opinion of *Cerintus*, who denied his Divinity, was the chief design of our Apostle and Evangelist in writing his Gospel, as *Ireneus* and *St. Hierome* assure us.

And this distinction the Jews very plainly and clearly understood. For when our Savior assumed to himself the denomination of being the son of God, they took his meaning to be, that he thereby professed himself to be the *natural son of God*, and not only a son *by adoption* and favor, as he must be supposed to be, if he were no otherwise the *son of God*, but because he was the *Messiah*. For the consequences which they drew from this affirmation of his could not agree to one who

¹ *Lib. 3. Cap. 11.* ² *Catal. Script. Ecclesiast.* And the same is affirmed by *Euseb.* viz. that St. *John* wrote his Gospel to assert the Divinity of our Savior; tho he doth not make mention of *Cerintus* his Hereſy as the occasion of his writing. Εικότως δ' ἐν τῇ μὲν τῆς σαρκὸς τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν γενεαλογίᾳ, ἀπὸ Μαρταίου καὶ Λευκα περιγράφουσα, ἀποσιωπᾷ τὸν Ἰωάννην τῆς δὲ διδαχῆς ἀπὸρριπτοῦ, ὡς ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος οὐκ ἀκρίβητος παραπαραλαβόμενος. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. Lib. 3. Cap. 24.*

was only a son by adoption. For *Jo. 5. 18.* by saying that *God was his Father idus natus*, his own proper Father in a peculiar sense, they drew this conclusion, that he made himself *equal to God, i. e.* of the same nature and substance; otherwise it was not possible to suppose any such equality. So again *Jo. 10. 30.* by his affirming that *He and his Father were one*; they infer, and infer rightly, that he thereby plainly *made himself God*, v. 33.

Once more at his arraignment before *Pilate*, these two affirmations of his, that he was *Christ*, and that he was the *son of God*, gave occasion for a double charge and indictment against him. Both indeed by the Jews were accounted Capital Crimes, but yet of a different nature: the one being a crime against the State, the other against God and Religion. For in that he said he was *Christ a King*, this they improved into an accusation of High Treason, *Luke 23. 2. we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give Tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.* So *Jo. 19. 12. whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Cæsar.* But in that he said he was the *son of God*, this was always by them accounted *Blasphemy*, and a sin directly and immediately against God. The High priest when he heard that he owned himself to be the son of God, and that as such, he should sit on the right hand of power, rent his clothes, and said that he *Blasphemed*, *Math. 26. 64, 65.* And *Jo. 19. 7. we have a law, and by that law he ought to dye, because he made himself the son of God.* From all which it appears, that to be the *Messiah*, and to be the *son of God*, signify two different things, and therefore are not equipollent terms.

2dly, This will farther appear from hence, *viz.* that our Saviour was the *son of God* before he was the *Messiah*, and therefore these two phrases cannot denote the same thing. He was not the *Messiah*, as that bespeaks him to be a Mediator between God and men, before the fall of *Adam*; nor was he so, as to the actual and complete execution of that office, for many ages after; even till his assuming our nature, and his being born and brought forth into the world. But he was the *son of God* before the fall of *Adam*, nay, before the foundations of the Earth and the World were laid, even from everlasting.

3dly, The

3dly, The ground and foundation of these two titles is vastly different: the one, *viz.* that of his being the son of God, being founded in an *eternal generation*; the other, that of his being the Messiah, in *designation and appointment*, and a mutual agreement between him and his father.

Which furnisheth us with a 4th, and an unanswerable reason against this assertion, *viz.* that to be the *Messiah* was but a *voluntary*, and therefore in it self a *contingent matter*, and that in two respects, the first whereof respects the fall and misery of man, which was antecedent to his redemption and recovery: so that if man had not sinned, as he might not (his sin being the result of his own freedom and choice) the *son of God* would never have been the *Messiah*. The second respects the gracious, but free pleasure of God. For after man had sinned, he might and must have been irrecoverably ruined and undone for ever, had not God in great compassion found out a way for his deliverance: which deliverance was the result of meer mercy, and founded in mutual but voluntary compact between the Father and the Son, as was said before. But that our Savior should be the *son of God*, this did not depend upon *arbitrary consent and pleasure*; but upon a *natural, necessary, and therefore an eternal generation*.

I confess these three last reasons will signify little with a *Socinian*, who denies any other nature in Christ, then that which he had, and received in the womb of the Virgin; or any existence, antecedent to his Birth and appearance in the world. But however they must be of irresistible force against all others, who agree with the *Socinians* in this notion, and yet acknowledge the Divinity and eternal generation of our Savior; who was therefore the son of God, both *before*, and for a *reason* vastly different from that whereby he was constituted the *Messiah*, as is fully and plainly acknowledged by *Episcopius*; who yet in direct opposition to that acknowledgment, confounds these two titles, which ought very carefully to be distinguished. But he did it to serve a very ill purpose: not indeed to impugn the truth and certainty of this great Article concerning the divinity of Christ, but to overthrow the *necessity of believing it*; and

and thereby he dangerously weakens, not to say undermines that important truth, which he had before not only plainly affirmed, but likewise very clearly, and I think unanswerably vindicated.

I say he hereby *weakens* that great Article of our Faith; and the reason why I say so, is this, because if Christ be God, as he grants he is, it can be for no other reason, but because he is the *natural and eternal son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds*: by which eternal generation he had the divine nature communicated to him, and thereby became truly and properly God. If any man therefore shall say, that the *God-head* of our Savior is not included in that style and phrase of his being called the *son of God*, I must aver that by so saying, he doth not only weaken, but by consequence subvert, as one of the clearest, so likewise the fundamental proof of his Divinity. All other proofs of it which are taken from the *name, operations, and perfections of the Deity*, which are ascribed to him in the Scriptures, being founded upon this Title and supported by it.

For when he is called *God*, and the Divine works and attributes are ascribed to him, we must not think that he is God *distinct* from his Father, but *one* with him, partaker of the same divine nature and essence. Neither must he be supposed to have this divine nature and essence *of and from himself*, but from the Father, of *whom he was begotten before all Worlds*. In short, if he be not the son of God by a *true and essential generation*, then it is certain that he is not God. But if he be God by virtue of his being the *son of God*, then whenever we own and profess him to be that *Son*, we must at the same time allow, that the divine nature and substance was communicated to him from all Eternity, by a true, proper, tho' mysterious and ineffable Generation; *for who can declare it?*

When I say the divine nature was communicated to him from the Father, I mean the same *individual, numerical divine nature and substance*; and so must every one else mean, that acknowledges and rightly believes the eternal Generation of the Son. By which phrase we understand, and therefore are obliged to

to believe, that the son of God was not made or created, *ex nihilo*, as the *Arians* of old blasphemously affirmed; but *begotten of the substance of his Father*; not by the substance, that is, by the Omnipotent substantial power of the Father, for in that sense the whole world, and every thing in it, may be said to be produced by the substance or substantial power of God the Father; but *ex substantia*, of his substance, which was, as we before said, communicated to him from all eternity.

Now the substance of one person, whether finite or infinite, cannot be communicated to another, but either *in part*, or *in whole*: no other way of communication is conceivable. When the substance is communicated but in part, as it is in all finite Generations, whether of men, or other Animals and plants, (and it is impossible it should be otherwise there) then this partial communication is the foundation of a *specifical likeness* or Identity between the person begetting and the person begotten; and because the Father cannot communicate his whole essence and substance to his Son, therefore it is impossible that the son can be *consubstantial* to his Father, (I speak of men) *i. e.* partaker of the same numerical humane nature; for if so, the Father and Son would be but one and the same man. But because the son is so begotten of the substance of his father, as to be partaker of it only in part, out of which part his complete essence and nature is made and framed; (the same indeed *in kind*, but yet *numerically* distinguished from that of his father) therefore the father and the son to all intents and purposes must not only be two distinct persons, but likewise two different men.

But in the Divine Generation things are quite otherwise. For here, because it is repugnant to the infinite perfections of the divine nature, to be *divided or separated into parts*; therefore, if it be communicated from the father to the son, as the Scriptures assure us it is, then it must be communicated whole and entire, without *repetition or multiplication*, and consequently without the *least difference and distinction*. And therefore the Fathers when they speak of this divine and ineffable generation of the son of God, teach us carefully to avoid entertaining in our imagination, any mean and corporeal representations

tations of this matter; we must not think of any *τμήν, μερίδος*, or *divisions*, any *division*, *section*, or *separation of parts*; but we must believe that the whole divine nature is perfectly and entirely communicated from the father to the son; which because it can neither be *divided*, nor *multiplied*, nor consequently *numbered*, therefore it must be the same *numerical, individual nature* in both, without the least imaginable difference or distinction, as was said before.

In short, they who assert only a *specific Identity* of nature in the father and son, must either with the *Arians* affirm, that the Son was made *ἐκ ἑντος, non natus, sed factus*, that God the Father, by his Almighty power, created a divine person like himself, and formed him out of nothing: or else they must believe that but *part* of the divine nature, as in human generations, was communicated to him, out of which his whole essence and substance was framed: whereby he became a God of the *same kind* with his Father, but not of the same individual substance with him. Either of which affirmations, must be extremely erroneous, and directly repugnant both to natural reason, and revealed religion.

By all that hath been said, it is evident, that when our Savior affirmed of himself, and his Apostles afterwards, in pursuance of the commission which they received from him, published and declared to the world, that he was the *son of God*, meant, that he was the *natural son of God*, partaker of the same divine nature and substance with his Father, and therefore truly and properly *God*. Now the same persons, *viz.* Christ himself and his Apostles, do not only plainly declare him to be the son of God, but as plainly and positively require us to believe him to be so, and that under no less a penalty than eternal damnation. So our Savior himself, Jo. 3. 18. *He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God.* and v. 36. *He that believeth not the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* So his Apostles, and particularly the beloved Disciple, who rested his head in the bosom of his master, and knew his mind and meaning, as well I dare say, as *Grotius*, or *Episcopus*, or any the most Learned

Learned Interpreter of Scripture that ever was in the world; this beloved Apostle I say, is very copious and pathetical in urging the necessity of this faith, which we are now speaking of, 1 Jo. 4. 15. *Whosoever confesseth that Jesus is the son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* Again, *who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God?* ch. 5. 5.

This was the main scope and design of all his writings, to form in men a persuasion and acknowledgment of this truth. *These are written*, (saith he, speaking of our Savior's appearing to his Disciples after his resurrection, and the things which he spake and did in their presence) *that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name*, Jo. 20. 31. And *these things*, saith he in his Catholick Epistle directed to all the Churches, *have I written unto you, that ye might believe on the name of the son of God*, 1 Jo. 5. 13.

It is true indeed, and must not be denied, that our Savior is in the Scriptures styled the son of God upon other accounts than this that we are now insisting on, viz. his eternal generation. But then I say, it matters not upon how many accounts, and for what other reasons he may be called the *son of God*, provided it be acknowledged, as it is by the persons with whom we are now disputing, that he is truly and properly so called, because he is the *natural and eternal son of God*: whenever he is called so upon any other account, it is only in a borrowed and figurative sense: the *eternal generation* being the only true, proper ground of that appellation, whereby he is in a more emphatical manner called the *son*, and the *only begotten son of God*, by way of eminence, and therefore by way of appropriation, in which neither man, nor Angel, nor any other creature can share with him.

In this sense, as we shewed before, our Savior, and his Apostles, affirmed of him that he was the *son of God*; and for such, they likewise require us, under the greatest obligations imaginable, to own and acknowledg him. We must believe him so to be the *son of God* as to be *equal to his father*, because *one with him*,

which Christ affirms of himself, *Jo. 10. 30.* And tho our Savior in that Chapter justifies the assuming to himself the name of the *son of God* upon the account of his mission and consecration to the high and noble office of a Mediator or Messiah, *ver. 36.* yet it is plain even in that place, that he doth not insist chiefly on that reason, but declares himself to be the *son of God* in a higher and more sublime sense. For after this answer of his to the Jews, which was only *responsum ad hominem*; he justifies his former assertion, viz. *that he and his father were one*; and appeals to his Miracles as the clear proof of what he thus affirmed of himself, *v. 37.* *If I do not the works of my Father*, that is, such as none can do but he that is God, *believe me not, i. e.* to be what before I affirmed of my relation to God, that he is my Father. *But if I do, i. e.* the works of my father, then in all reason ye ought to believe that the Father is in me, and I in him; or which is the same tho in other words, that *I am one with him*, as I affirmed before.

Again, we must believe him to be the *son*, and the only *begotten son of God*, who as St. John saith, *was with God in the beginning, and was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made*, Nay the same St. John will tell us, *1 Jo. 5. 10.* that if we do not believe him thus to be the *son of God*, we make God a Liar, because we do not believe the record which God gave of him, who by a voice from Heaven, more than once, declared him to be his beloved Son.

What can be said to avoid the force of such plain and express declarations of Christ and his Apostles in this affair? why it is said, even by them who own the eternal generation of our Savior, (for with the Socinians I am not now discoursing) that it is a necessary duty to believe him indeed to be the *son of God*; but that it is only necessary to believe him to be so, in one of the *inferior and Metaphorical* significations of that word, but not in the *true and proper*, tho the more noble and sublime.

Now this I think at first view to any unprejudiced person may justly seem a strange answer, for in all words which are capable of two senses, the *natural and proper* is the primary, and therefore ought in the first place, and chiefly to be regarded: and the

the *Figurative*, especially if it be subordinate, as it is in the case now before us, is to be considered secondarily, and therefore in a more remote and inferior sense.

It will be said, that the *Metaphorical* and less proper sense, may yet be of greatest importance, as it is in the case before us, it being upon many accounts necessary to believe *Jesus to be the Messiah*, and in that notion the adopted son of God: but it is not of the like consequence to believe him to be the *eternal son of God*, and thereby partaker of the same divine nature with his Father. To which, tho several things might be replied, yet the answer that I at present insist upon is this, that we cannot rightly and truly own him to be the *Messiah* without believing him likewise to be the *son of God*: I mean so, as to be partaker of the divine nature, and therefore *truly and properly God*: forasmuch as no person less than God could discharge the offices, and performe the functions, which were to be executed by the *Messias*: As will appear by a particular consideration of those offices, and the duties and actions which belong to them.

But before I proceed farther in this matter, I must premise two things. 1st, That when it is said, as it is on all hands, that it is necessary to believe *Jesus to be the Messiah*, I presume it is agreed upon at the same time, that this faith doth not consist only in the pronouncing and affirming these words, but chiefly in the acknowledgment of the thing that is intended and signified by them: for without the sense and meaning the words are but a *dead Letter*; and tho we should pronounce them never so often, nor ever so vehemently; yet if we do not attend to the thing signified thereby, our confession of this truth will signifie no more than the chattering of a Magpie, or the prating of a Parrot, which may be taught to pronounce words by rote without any knowledg of their meaning.

2. That whatever *general faith* in the *Messiah* might be sufficient for the Jews before *Christ's* coming, or for such who lived presently after it, before these matters relating to his person and offices were *plainly and fully revealed*; yet the same will not be sufficient now for such who live within the pale of the Church, and to whom those doctrines are clearly and evidently

dently discovered, and sufficiently proposed: of such I say, it is required, that they should not only believe in general that *Jesus is the Messiah*: but, to render that faith effectual to the purposes for which it is enjoined, it is farther required, that they (provided that they have capacities to perceive and understand what is thus revealed) should acknowledge and believe, that he did such things as a *Prophet, Priest, and King*, which were necessary for him to perform as a *Mediator* between God and man, in order to procure the favor of the one, and the Salvation of the other. And these we say he could not do, if he were not God, as well as man, which I am now to shew.

And first, I say he could not be a *Prophet*, nor execute the duty of it, in such a manner, as the Scriptures assure us he did, except he were God. For he was to declare and publish to the world such sublime truths as no created knowledge could possibly discover, no finite understanding comprehend. And this both with relation to the *nature, perfections, * and counsels of God*, which none could possibly find out, but he who was in the *bosom of the Father*; who hath indeed declared and published them to the world, as was formerly shewn.

Perhaps it will be said, that he was no otherwise privy to these secrets, than as God the father thought fit to make him so, by a *voluntary discovery* first to him, of what thereby he was empowered to reveal to the world. And to do this, doth not necessarily suppose in him a divine nature; all that may be inferred from thence is, that by a particular act of *Grace and favor*, he was admitted into a more intimate view of the *nature and decrees of God* than any other: no such knowledge being ever communicated to any other person, as was freely and graciously bestowed upon him. *I Ans.* That this was not that in which his superlative dignity above all other Prophets consisted; but he is in the Scriptures plainly distinguished from them, upon this account, *viz.* that he was enabled to make this discovery, not by an *occasional and arbitrary communication*; but by a *permanent, necessary and abiding principle* of infinite knowledge in himself, and which he no otherwise received from his Father, than as he did the divine nature it self, which was communicated to him,

* *Matb. 11. 27.*

by a natural, necessary, and eternal generation. He is closely and intimately united to his father; *he is in the father and the father in him*, whereby they mutually comprehend, and are comprehended of each other. So that he perfectly and at one view beholds the infinite nature and perfections of his father, and is privy to all his counsels and decrees. And as *the Spirit of a man* is conscious to all his own motions, cogitations, and resolutions, without the help of any forreign and new discovery: so the *Spirit of God* knows all the things of God, which none else could know but by the help of that *spirit*. But the *spirit it self* knows them by his own intimate union with God, whose spirit he is, *who searches all things*, even the *τὰ βάθη τῶ θεοῦ*, the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 10. Now this *spirit of God*, is likewise the *spirit of Christ*, which was in the *Prophets of old*, and spake by them 1 Pet. 1. 11. And it was the same *spirit* which animated and instructed the Apostles, *leading them into all truth*, who, as our Savior saith, *should be given to them by the Father*, Jo. 14. 16. But yet in the succeeding ch. Jo. 16. 7. he tells them, *that he would send him likewise, viz. the Comforter*, who was the *spirit of truth*, who was given them on purpose, *to lead them into all truth*, v. 13. of that ch. He was *to receive from Christ* what afterwards he was to *shew unto them*, v. 14. So that he was the *spirit of the Father*, and the *spirit of the Son*; who proceeded from both, and was sent by both; *for all things that the father hath, saith Christ, are mine, therefore said I, he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you*, v. 15.

To conclude this head: he, who by a *permanent and abiding principle* of knowledge within himself, and not by a *delegated and arbitrary communication*, comprehends within the vast and mighty compass of his understanding the whole divine nature, and all the perfections of his Father, and is privy to all his secrets, as a mans Soul is conscious to all his own thoughts and resolutions; he who is the *eternal word and wisdom of his father*, who knows all that the father knows, and hath revealed such things which none could possibly discover but the *eternal spirit*, who lyes in the bosom of God, and thereby *searches the deep things* that are lodged there: He must be endued with infinite knowledge,

ledge, and be partaker of the *divine nature*, as well as the *divine secrets*, and therefore must be God. And for this reason we ought to submit our reasons, and resign our understandings to his authority, it being part of that homage and divine worship which is due to him. And therefore in matters of faith we must be content with his affirmation, whether we do or do not *comprehend* those divine truths which he hath revealed. Which *comprehension* ought to be of no regard in these matters, it being extrinsecal to the true and *formal reason* of believing; which is not resolved into the *evidence of the thing*, but into the *authority of God*, and the truth and certainty of his Revelations.

But *2dly*, Let us consider him as a *King*, and then we shall find that none could execute the *Regal office* in such a manner as it was to be administered by the *Messiah* but he that was God. And that first, if we consider the vast extent of his dominion, which was to reach over the whole World; the Heavens and the Earth and all things in them; Men and Angels, both good and bad, were to be the Subjects of this mighty Empire. *All things are put under his feet, and he is made the head over all things to the Church*, and for the sake of it, Eph. 1. 22. *He is placed above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but likewise in that which is to come*, v. 21. Upon this account he is styled the *Prince of the Kings of the Earth, King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, Rev. 8. 5. Rev. 27. 14. It is true indeed, this power is said to be given him, as the reward of his obedience and sufferings. But we must know, that antecedent to this gift, he was possessed of a *natural, inherent and essential Sovereignty*, and which he no otherwise received, as was before observed of his infinite knowledge, then as he received the divine nature it self from his father, to which this power is necessarily and essentially annexed. And as to that other power which was bestowed upon him as *Mediator*, by way of gift; he could not possibly have bin capable of it, if he had not been *God* as well as *Man*. For who can be fit to be entrusted with so vast a Sovereignty over all parts of the Creation, but he who was the Creator

Creator of them. None but the eternal God, can be the *Lord of Heaven and Earth*: It is the stile and appellation by which he is known, and by which he is distinguished from all *false Gods*. No Creature is capable of being advanced to so great and high a dignity: because this were to place him upon the same level with the supreme God; which cannot be done, without confounding all distinction in point of *greatness and power*, between God and the Creature. And the like confusion it must inevitably bring between both, in the duties of *Homage and adoration*, which are founded in the abovenamed prerogatives of sovereignty and power; quite contrary to the express and solemn declarations of Gods pleasure in this case. For we find him at the same time, and with the same solemnity, asserting the *Unity* of his nature, and the *Unity*, if I may so speak, of his worship. Thus *Esay 45. 22, 23. I am the Lord, and there is none else. And by my self have I sworn, the word is gone forth in righteousness and shall not return: (the Decree we see is immutable and irreversible) unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.* These being the acknowledgments of his infinite sovereignty, in which none can share with him, without a high encroachment on his divine prerogative, and a manifest violation of his commands and pleasure: for he hath solemnly and frequently declared, that *this his glory he will not give to another.*

And yet it is as plain that he hath parted with it to the Messiah: For God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, *Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.* And accordingly we find him that sitteth on the Throne, that is, God the Father, and the Lamb, that is, the Son, joined together in the same expressions of adoration, and in the highest strains of them, for *Rev. 5. 11, 12, 13.* we find the *Angels who were about the Throne, and the Beasts and Elders, the number of which was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: and together with them, every Creature which is in Heaven and Earth and under the Earth; and such as are in the Sea and all that are in them, ascribing blessing and glory and power, unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

By which it appears, that they are joined together in the same act of adoration, without any difference or inequality.

Now then we must either assert, that the Son of God to whom these *divine honors* are paid, is really partaker of the *divine nature*, as well as these divine honors: or else we must make *Idolatry*, viz. the ascribing divine worship to a creature, an uncertain arbitrary matter; not founded in the eternal and unalterable laws of reason, and the nature of things; but depending upon the positive, and therefore mutable declarations of Gods will and pleasure. And if so, then the *Heathens* were guilty of no such great crime, as hath hitherto been imagined; if of any at all, in giving religious worship, either to *Angels*, or the *souls of pious men*; or other eminent parts of the Creation: so much as God having made no such *plain and positive revelation* of his mind to them in this case, they must upon this supposition, be left to the uncertain conduct of their own *humors and fancies*, or if you please their *Reason*: which yet must be supposed to be left at liberty to make choice of any convenient objects for divine worship; since there were no eternal and unchangable rules of nature, to direct and determine its choice.

But 2^{dly}, That none could execute the *regal office*, as it was to be administred by the *Messiah*, except he were *God*, will farther appear from a consideration of those actions in which the exercise of this sovereignty doth consist; as also of those reciprocal duties of hope, trust, dependance, and an entire submission to his authority, which are required of us; all which do necessarily suppose in him *infinite perfections*, and cannot be performed by us, without the supposal of his *Omnipresence*, or at least of his *Infinite wisdom and power*: as is acknowledged by *Socinus* and his Disciples.

Now to suppose a *finite being*, capable of these *infinite perfections*, which are requisite for the discharge of this office, is one of the greatest absurdities imaginable, and indeed can amount to no less, than a plain contradiction: because it must quite alter the natures, and take away the distinction of things; and with it all truth and certainty, which must hereby be entirely subverted and destroyed. And he that can say or affirm this, may
with

with equal right affirm or deny any thing at his pleasure, and if he will persist in it, he can neither be convinced nor confuted.

Now the force of this Argument in order to prove the *divinity* of our Savior, which is taken from the consideration of those *divine* perfections of *infinite power and knowledge*, which are requisite for the discharge of the *Kingly* office of the *Messiah*; and that *divine* worship and adoration, which is the necessary consequence of that *supreme* authority and those *infinite* perfections; is fully acknowledged, and by clear and unanswerable arguments proved, and made out by the *Socinians*, and those other *Unitarians*, who in the point of Invocation, and the adoration of our Savior, differ from *Socinus*. I mean one part of the Argument is acknowledged by *Socinus*, and the other by the other *Unitarians*: and the whole is clearly demonstrated by both, which is sufficient for our purpose.

And 1st, That Christ is possessed of those above named perfections of *infinite wisdom and power* is confessed by *Socinus*,

as

1. Et propterea in hoc & superiori loco (scil. Apoc. 2. cap. 23. & Heb. 3. 5. & 6.) Christo simpliciter & absolute tribui agnosco, quod corda hominum noscat & scrutetur: quod de nullo prophetarum unquam dictum fuit, aut dici potuit. Socin. Resp. ad Wick. p. 616. Quilibet ratione praeditus, si modo sacris literis fidem adjungat, cum videt in ipsis expressum esse, Christo à Deo datum fuisse omne judicium, nihil prorsus dubitat Christum hominem omnia nosse quae à nobis agantur, cum judicium sine cognitione exercere nequeat. Socin. contra Franken. p. 771. & contra Francisc. Dav. p. 739.

2. Quamvis Christus non est creationis socius, est tamen divinae potestatis socius. De potestate autem loquimur summa, cum imperio videlicet ac dominatione conjuncta; qualem una cum divinis scriptoribus affirmamus eam esse, quam Christus ex Dei patris dono habet. Id. contra Frank. p. 773. In Christo ipsa Dei potentia, divinitas atque majestas residet, atque relucet. Id. ibid. p. 769. Nego falsum esse, Christum in Ecclesia participem esse omnipotentiae. Ibid. Dico igitur, verum esse solius Dei esse facere miracula: nec quisquam miracula facere potest ipso non dante & concedente. Hec autem datio & concessio varia esse potest, & amplior restrictiorve, prout ipsi Deo visum fuerit. Praecipua vero differentia in eo consistit, an potestas data & concessa in eo ipso resideat cui data est, ejusque arbitrio perpetuo permessa, atque ejus propria facta: an vero non in eo ipso resideat cui data est; sed ad arbitrium dantis ei sit concessa; ita ut precario, non autem domini titulo eam possideat. Christo ut omnium domino & haeredi universorum designato, ipsiusque Dei personam plenissima ac singularissima ratione in terris, in iis quae ad salutem nostram aeternam pertinent, sustinenti, talem potestatem Deum dare miracula faciendi decuit, qualem priore loco descripsimus. Id. Resp. ad Wick. p. 616.

as being absolutely necessary for the execution of that supreme sovereignty and dominion, with which he is now invested in Heaven, where *he sits at the right hand of God*, men and Angels, and the whole Creation being now subject unto him.

2dly, That being possessed of this divine power, and those perfections, he is thereby become the object of *religious invocation and worship*. And this is not only acknowledged, but earnestly contended for by *Socinus*: who in several places in his writings, declares this to be a necessary duty, without which we cannot be Christians, nor be entituled to any of the benefits which Christ hath purchased for us.

From hence it must follow, that the belief of that one Article, that *Jesus is the Messiah*, even in the judgment of *Socinus* himself, (tho upon other occasions it be often affirmed by him) is not sufficient to make and constitute men Christians; except they likewise believe, what he saith, and saith rightly is the unavoidable consequence of that concession, that he is likewise to be adored, and that it is lawful to make our addresses to him by religious invocation. The contrary opinion, which was maintained in his time by *Palaeologus, Francis David, Franken, &c.* is condemned by him as a damnable error, which overthrows the Christian Religion; and thereby renders those who entertain it,

Apostolorum potestas in eo diversa potissimum à Christi potestate fuit, quod ipse virtute patris in se manente & fecit, & facit; illi virtute quidem eadem, sed non in ipsis, verum in Christo residente faciebant, in cuius nomine operabantur. Id. Resp. ad Francisci Dav. Defensionem. p. 727. Nihil prorsus est contra Scripturæ sacræ analogiam, si duo æqualem potestatem in Ecclesia habere dicantur. Agnoverunt Judæi Christum sese quadam ratione Deo parem facere, Jo. 5. 18. Et ipsum in forma Dei, & æqualem Deo fuisse aperte testatur Paulus, Phil. 2. 6. Quam æqualitatem ad potentiam operandi referri debere, loci ipsi manifestum faciunt. Nullo autem modo absurdum est, ut duo sint æqualem habentes potestatem, quorum tamen alter alteri subjiciatur & subordinetur, ita ut non duæ sed una potestas censeatur.

1. Video nihil in tota Christiana religione majoris momenti edi posse, quam hoc sit, demonstratio videlicet, quod Christo invocatio seu cultus divinus conveniat. Sic vera Christi potestas & majestas ostendetur, & in omnium animis conformabitur: sine cujus cognitione, nec Deus ipse, nec quidquam rerum divinarum recte cognoscitur; salutis nostræ ratio revera ignoratur; ipsius Christi universa religio in dubium revocatur; aut saltem mutationi & fini in hoc ipso sæculo obnoxia redditur, &c. Socin. de Invocatione Chr. Tom. 1. p. 353.

unworthy

unworthy of the ¹ Communion of the faithful, and much less fit for the sight and enjoyment of God. That is in short, it excludes men out of the Church here, and will shut the doors of Heaven against them hereafter.

Now from these two *premisses* which Socinus hath furnished us with, upon good reason and great authority, the other Unitarians have drawn this infallible conclusion; that if Christ be possessed of the before mentioned divine authority, and perfections, and be the object of divine worship, he must therefore infallibly be God. These being the clear and unanswerable proofs of his Divinity; forasmuch as none but God can have the infinite perfections of the Godhead, and thereupon be capable of divine worship and religious invocation.

And indeed the connexion between these two things is so evident, that Socinus and his followers dare not deny it: but on the other hand, contend earnestly for it, as for an undoubted and an important truth, viz. that Christ since his ascension into heaven is *Consecrated* and *deified*, and thereby become *Verus Deus*, a true

1 In posterum, ab istis omnibus qui Christo Jesu adorationem & invocationem, cultum denique divinum non concedunt, diligentissime nobis caveamus; neque cum iis qui tanta blasphemiam vel suspecti quidem sunt, quicquam commercii habeamus. Idem ad Synod. Chmeln. Epist. cod. Tom. p. 397. Unus etiam, (de Paleologo loquitur) atque adeo ni fallor, præcipuus fuit ex antesignanis illorum qui Christum nec adorandum nec invocandum esse hodie affirmant, & tamen se Christianos esse impudenter prostentur, quo vix quidquam scelestius in religione nostra depravanda excogitari posse existimo. Merito igitur talis homo talem finem est sortitus, ut cum sui nominis perpetua ignominia, & quod multo pejus est, animæ æterna jactura magnæ illi meretrici (Romana scil. Ecclesiæ) denuo sese adjunxerit. Id Resp. ad Wiek. Tom. 2. Oper. p. 538. S' id quid pluribus opus est, cum tu ipse evidenter testeris, eum qui Christum invocandum negat, nec potestatem, nec gubernationem Christi in Ecclesiâ agnoscere, sine qua agnitione & professione, nemo salutem per Christum adipisci potest. Epist. 2. Joh. Niemoj. ad Faust. Socin. cod. Tom. p. 470.

2 Si Christus invocandus & adorandus est, duo manifeste pugnantia cum verbo Dei admittuntur, primo Christum esse illum unum verum Deum qui Israel ex Ægypto duxit, &c. Fran. Davidis contra Socin. p. 751. & 742. Dato quod Christus ipse potestatem efficiendi habet, & facultatem præstandi, ut habeamus vitam æternam & resurgamus, optimo jure jam Deus non officio, sed natura proprie dici potest & debet, Id. p. 737.

3 Nec nos, Christum dominum Deumque nostrum esse negamus, immo & ultro protestemur, & vehementer gloriamur. Socin. contra Eutrop. p. 707. Nemo profecto, qui mente non caret, negaverit eum in quo plane divinæ virtutis relucebat, Deum ob id ipsum merito dici potuisse, & porro fuisse. Id. ibid. p. 641. & alibi passim.

God,

God, made indeed and constituted such, *Deus factus*, but however possessed of a true and real Divinity.

I need not here acquaint the Reader what opinion *Socinus* and his Disciples have of the *Divinity* of our Savior, as it is owned and stated in the *Catholic Church*: How they load it, together with the other Articles of the Christian faith which have a connexion with it, with all the heaviest and most scandalous imputations, that wit heightened with malice could possibly suggest. Particularly, that it is a foolish and absurd opinion, repugnant to their clear and distinct Ideas and perceptions; and therefore, that it is so far from being an incomprehensible truth, that they plainly comprehend it to be a contradiction to our natural notions, it being a brutal and inexcusable error, repugnant to common sense as well as true reason.

Now let us examin this matter a little, and with the Readers leave and patience, fairly compare the Doctrine of the *Christian Church* concerning the *Divinity* of our Savior, with what these men affirm of it: and then I doubt not to make it appear; that all that charge of absurdity and nonsense, which (with equal falsehood and impudence) they load our doctrine with; is justly to be laid at their door, and retorted upon this *new and monstrous opinion* of theirs. Which is infinitely derogatory to the honor of God, repugnant to his divine nature and perfections, and tends plainly to undermine the foundations of all Religion, which can never long subsist where the *right notions* of God, and the *distinction* between him and his creatures are plainly subverted, as they are by this opinion.

1st Then: The Christian Church believes and professes that Christ is *true God*, and therefore that he is the *eternal God*; who had his being before the *foundation of the earth and the world was laid, even from everlasting*: necessary existence, and therefore eternal duration, *à parte ante*, being included in the notion of God. It is true indeed, he hath not his Godhead of and from himself, but from his Father, of whom he was begotten. But however this doth not depend upon arbitrary consent and pleasure, as we before observed, but upon a natural, necessary, and therefore an eternal Generation.

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The Socinians on the other hand tell us, that he is a *God*, distinct from his Father, and not only so, but that he is a *junior* and a *modern* God; made and constituted such, the other day, by the appointment of his Father. So that his *Godhead* is purely an arbitrary and contingent matter, not arising from any necessity founded in the nature of the thing, but perfectly owing to divine *Grace and favor*.

Now let any honest and unprejudiced reader fairly compare both these accounts, and then impartially pass sentence, whether of them seems to be most agreeable to plain reason. Will not natural reason? (I mean where it is not corrupted and depraved) agree with the declaration of the Christian Church, that if Christ be God, he must be so from all eternity? yes undoubtedly it will. Indeed the Christian religion farther informs us, that he hath his *Godhead* communicated to him by way of Generation, being begotten of the substance of his Father, which because it cannot be either divided or multiplied, must be one and the very same in both. This we must acknowledge to be a great and deep mystery, not to be *found out*, and much less *fathomed* by our shallow finite understandings. But yet at the same time we must affirm, that tho it *surpasses* our reason, it contains nothing that *overthrows* any plain dictate of it. For tho it must be confessed, that this may be repugnant to common notions and those Ideas which we have of *finite being*; whose nature and essence cannot be communicated without being multiplied and divided into parts; but must it from thence follow, that it is contrary to any plain Idea and notion that we have of an *infinite being*? No, neither Logick nor Divinity will teach us to make any such inference; but rather the quite contrary, *viz.* that since we cannot form a *complete and adequate conception* of all the powers and perfections of the Godhead which is infinite; that therefore things *may be so* as the Church declares, for ought that *reason* can shew to the contrary: nay that they *must be so*, since this account is supported by a *supernatural*

Ἰ Θεὸς ἐκ γενεῆς ἢ προϋπάρχων ὧς ὄντων, ἀπεκρίνατο, διὸς ἀγεννητος γάρ. Σωκράτης ἐκ γενεῆς ἢ διὸς ἦσαν, τὸ ἀγεννητον καὶ αἰδον. Stob. Eclog. Phy. Lib. 1. Cap. 1.

and divine revelation. It being highly reasonable to conclude, that God almighty best knows his own nature, and the manner of its subsistence; and therefore that the account which he gives of himself being certainly true, ought to be believed and entertained, tho we cannot comprehend it.

On the other hand, the *Socinian* account of the divinity of Christ, is directly contrary to reason, and overthrows two principal dictates of it, concerning the Unity, and the necessary, and therefore eternal existence of the Godhead; both which are plainly included in the right notion which we frame of it.

2dly, The Church saith, that if Christ be *truly* God, and not only such in a figurative and metaphorical sense: that he must therefore be partaker of the divine nature and substance. Every thing being what it is by virtue of its nature and essence. If a man be a true man, he must be partaker of a human nature; and a true Angel must partake of the nature of an Angel. And the like must be affirmed of every thing else, whether created or uncreated, finite or infinite, the reason being the very same and common to them all. But the *Socinians* on the other hand say that Christ is *truly* God, and yet at the same time that he is a meer man; That he is *Deus verus*, as *Socinus* calls him, *Deus eximius*, as *Wolzen*. nay not to acknowledge him to be a true God, is to renounce the Christian Religion; saith *Smalcius*, and yet they affirm that he is not any way partaker of the divine nature. Which is all one, as if a man should assert, that there were a true Triangle which had never an Angle in it, a square without ever a side, a figure without a line, a sentence without words, or a word without ever a letter. None of which can contain a greater absurdity than to say, that there is a true God without the Godhead, a divine person without a divine nature. Which is not only a false assertion, but a plain contradiction, and downright nonsense; If I may be allowed upon this occasion to make use of those decent characters, which these men at every turn bestow upon the sublime Articles of our holy faith.

1 See the first part of the Preservative, p. 9, 10.

Perhaps it will be said, that the *Socinians* when they affirm Christ to be a *true God* mean that he is so only with respect to his *supreme dominion*, and those divine perfections which are necessary for the exercise of it. I know they do say so, but by this saying they are so far from clearing the point, that they confirm the former objections, and perplex this matter with new difficulties.

For 1st, They suppose him to be a true God without a God-head, which is nothing else but the divine nature. For tho he should be possessed of the dominion and perfections before mentioned, without the divine nature, if that were possible; yet this would make him a God only in a figurative sense; by a *Metonymie* of the subject for the adjunct; but he could not be *Deus verus*, which they always affirm. It is true indeed, this *supreme power* is a clear proof of his *Divinity*; but then it doth not *constitute* but *suppose* him to be God. As the Regal power doth not make the King a man, but suppose him to be such, otherwise he were not capable of it.

But 2^{dly}, By this answer they separate that which is *essential* from its *proper subject*, and thereby overthrow one of the first, and most universally received principles of Reason and Philosophy. For this Sovereignty which we are now speaking of, is not in God as it may be in men, founded in compact and voluntary consent; or owing to the appointment of any superior power from whom it may be derived: but it is found in the *divine nature* and perfections, and more immediately in those actions of *Creation and providence*, which necessarily suppose that divine nature, without which they could not be performed. So that this dominion over his Creatures is a *natural and necessary* Sovereignty, always inherent in the God-head, and cannot be separated from it. And so are likewise those before mentioned perfections of *power and wisdom*, which are necessary attributes, or *properties* of the divine nature. So we must be allowed to speak of them in the present case, tho really and truly they are only *different conceptions* of one and the same simple and uncompounded nature.

To this it will be farther said, that it is true, these attributes

butes are originally and *essentially* in God; and in Christ only by way of *participation*, being communicated to him from God the Father. Be it so, but then we must enquire, whether the divine nature be not likewise communicated with these divine perfections? If they say no it is not; then I say these following absurdities and plain contradictions, must be the unavoidable consequences of that affirmation.

1st, That what is *essential* may be separated from its proper *essence*: i. e. the divine perfections from the divine nature: which must entirely destroy all true notions of God, and utterly confound all distinction between him and his creatures: I mean as to his nature and essence. For allowing that these attributes are *originally* in God, and by way of *communication* in his creatures; this will argue only a subordination and dependance, but will be no argument of any difference of nature between them. Now forasmuch as the nature of things in themselves are hid from us, and that we cannot either *know* or *distinguish* them but by their properties and operations: if the *properties* of God can be communicated to men, then the *essential distinction* between God and man must hereby be confounded and utterly lost.

2^{dly}, From hence it must follow, that what is *peculiar* to one may be common to many, who may *receive* what cannot be *bestowed*, and *participate* of what is *incommunicable*. These things being included in the notion of a property; *proprium quarto modo*, (and such are the divine attributes) that it can neither be separated from the essence, nor communicated to any other. Now that the same thing should be proper and yet common, communicated and yet be incommunicable, can amount to no less than a palpable contradiction.

Lastly, From hence it must follow, that a *finite creature* is capable of *infinite perfections*: which is infinitely a greater absurdity than to affirm, that not only the writings of *Homer*, but all the water in the Ocean may be comprehended in a nutshell. For supposing for once, that the properties could be *communicated*; yet one would think it were impossible that they should be communicated to a subject that were not *capable* of

of receiving them. That maxim being of undoubted and eternal truth, that *quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientis*. A rational creature can undoubtedly receive different degrees and improvements of knowledge; but yet this must be still with respect to its own powers and capacities. For as no agent can do more, than he hath *power of doing*: so no patient can receive more than it hath a *capacity of receiving*, which always supposes a proportion between them. Now there being no proportion between finite and infinite; it must therefore be impossible that a finite being, whose faculties and capacities are finite likewise, should be possessed of infinite power and knowledge, because this were to suppose that it actually enjoyed more than it was capable of receiving.

If it should be said that the *capacities of Christs* humane nature were by the Almighty power of God enlarged, whereby he became in a condition to receive what otherwise he was not naturally capable of. I Ans. That the *capacities of Christ* could not be enlarged beyond the fixt bounds and limits of his nature, which being finite, can admit of nothing that is infinite. And therefore the question which will arise from hence must be, whether the *nature of Christ* be enlarged as well as these supposed *faculties and capacities*. If they say no, as they do, and are positive in it; then I must affirm that this supposition is irrational and groundless, and is liable to all the absurdities before mentioned: in making a *finite being*, while it continues such, to have an *infinite capacity*: which is absolutely impossible and more difficult to be conceived; than that the dimensions of a mans hand, while that continues the same as to its substance, should be so far extended, as that within its compass it should be able to grasp not only the globe of the Earth, but likewise the vast and prodigious circumference of the Heavens.

In short then, and to bring this matter to some Issue: Are not the *perfections* of infinite power and wisdom proper to God? This cannot well be denied. 2dly, Doth not the *supreme dominion* with which *Christ* is invested, necessarily suppose those infinite perfections, without which it could not be exercised?

This likewise must be granted. But will it not therefore follow in the last place, that therefore Christ is God? Here one would think that Socinus should be so entangled that he could not easily disengage himself. But tho' you see him never so fast, and think you have him bound hand and foot; yet by the help of some strange and unforeseen distinction, he presently sets himself at liberty.

For when urged and pressed with this objection by *Christian Franken* in the dispute between them about the divine worship and adoration of Christ; *Socinus* answers, that Christ indeed is partaker of the divine perfections, and particularly of Omnipotence, but it is only in a certain respect; viz. in *Ecclesia*, in his Church, and with relation to those things that pertain to it. *Franken* farther urges; that we may not faith he, *brandish our Swords, and combat in the dark*: Is this power of Christ infinite, or is it not? *Socin.* Answers, it is infinite, but not absolutely so, but (as he said before) only in his Church. An arbitrary and a very senseless distinction. For he acknowledges that Christ is possessed of a power of doing every thing in the Church, & *ea omnia que quocunque modo ad Ecclesiam pertinent*: which any way may appertain and be for the good of the Church. And if so, then every thing may come within the compass of this power; because every thing may one way or other, either *mediately or immediately, directly or indirectly* have some relation to the Church. For within this Omnipotence is certainly included, as the same *Socinus* confesses,

1 Ob. *Franken.* Si Christus particeps est adorationis, ergo & particeps est Omnipotentia ac reliquarum proprietatum Dei, sed hoc est falsum. Resp. *Socin.* Nego esse falsum Christum participem esse Omnipotentiam in Ecclesia. *Franken.* Omnipotentia, sive in Ecclesia sive extra Ecclesiam est proprietas solius Dei. *Socin.* Absoluta Omnipotentia est proprietas Dei. Et postea, Deus simpliciter est infinite Omnipotens. Christi Omnipotentia est in Ecclesia tantum. *Franken.* Ne gladium in tenebris ventilemus, quero quid voces Omnipotentiam in Ecclesia. *Socin.* Omnipotentiam in Ecclesia voco datam Christo potestatem servandi omnes qui ipsi obediunt. Adde & ea omnia faciendi que ad Ecclesiam quocunque modo pertinent; sive ad universam sive ad partem ejus, seu denique ad singulos quosque qui ex eo numero aliquaratione sunt. Hanc potestatem, agnoscit *Socinus* tantam esse, ut in suo genere infinita & Omnipotens appellari mereatur, quia prorsus inquit, singularis est & divina. Disp. inter Faust. Socin. & Christ. *Franken.* de honore Christi. Tom. 1. Oper. Socin. p. 769

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the power of *working Miracles*, of *pardoningsins*, of *raising the dead*, of *saving and damning*; and in short, of altering the whole course and frame of nature, when it is for the use and service of the Church. All this Christ is allowed to doe, and that by a permanent and abiding principle of action within himself.

The same question then naturally returns; and we must ask again, is not this power which enables him to do all this, an *infinite power*? Yes saith Socin. it is, *in suo genere prorsus divina & singularis*, in its kind absolutely divine; and such as no other Creature is possessed of. Well & but a power that is thus infinite in one kind, is it not so in every kind? Is it not a contradiction to say, that a person possessed of *omnipotent* power in some cases, is *limited* in others, because hereby he must be limited and unlimited, finite and infinite at the same time? No saith Socin. it is no absurdity to affirm this of one and the same person, provided it be in different respects, as it is in the case before us. Christs power being as was said before, with respect to his Church infinite; but kept within just limits in respect of other matters which have no relation to it. So that Christ indeed is *Omnipotent*, but yet he is *finitely* so; *infinite Omnipotence* being the sole property of God. But is not *infinite omnipotence* a ridiculous tautology, and *finite omnipotence*, a contradictory blunder? Cannot the same omnipotent power which enables Christ to do every thing *within* the Church, enable him likewise to do any thing out of the Church? From whence must this difference arise? It can arise from nothing, but either first from the *difficulty of the things* to be done, or secondly, from the *pleasure and appointment* of God the Father who entrusted him with this power.

1st, As to the *difficulty* of the things, this can be no hinderance to the power of Christ, which is acknowledged to be infinite in its kind, and then certainly it must be so in every kind: because as all things that are placed out of the reach of a finite and created power are equally hard and difficult; so all things that are possible, to an infinite power are equally easy and capable of being done. It is a ridiculous imagination to

fancy that any power should *intensively* and with respect to the degrees of power be infinite; and yet *extensively*, and with relation to the objects, should be limited and finite. Can any thing be too hard for Omnipotence? No certainly, for whereever there is this divine power, it must be *prorsus divina & in omni genere*; it must be so at all times, and in all places, and upon all occasions.

But *2dly*, Tho it should be allowed that this difference doth not arise from the difficulty of the things to be done, yet it may perhaps be owing to the *pleasure of God*; who hath entrusted our Savior with this mighty power, but under just restrictions and limitations, *viz.* that he shall exercise it in the affairs of his Church, but not elsewhere, or upon other occasions.

I Ans. That this account, besides that it is liable to those two great absurdities before mentioned, *viz.* 1st, That God (if he so pleased) might bestow an *absolutely infinite power*, in its utmost extent, upon a creature: that is, that he might communicate what is incommunicable: for such are the divine attributes, and particularly an *infinite omnipotence* (I use the words of *Socin.* that the Reader may not wonder at the solecisme) which is acknowledged to be such. *2dly*, That a finite being is capable of infinite perfections. And besides these, *3dly*, That one infinite power can be controuled and restrained by another infinite power; which is impossible. For tho the persons in whom these powers may be lodged, may be subordinate, yet the powers themselves being infinite must be *equal*, and consequently both being *supreme*, one cannot be *subject* to the other. Otherwise we must suppose the same power to be *inferior* and yet *supreme*; *limited*, and yet *almighty*, *Impotent* and *Omnipotent*; which are termes which destroy one another. Besides this I say, it is directly contrary to the express words of Scripture, and even to the interpretation of those Scriptures by the *Socinians* themselves.

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1 Per mortem & resurrectionem suam, omnem potestatem in calo & in terra, id est
 Illuminum regnum atque imperium super omnes creaturas in calo & in terra existentes
 etiam

In Math. 28. 18. Our Savior tells his Disciples, *that all power was given to him in Heaven and Earth.* And St. Paul assures us *That all things are put under his feet.* Every thing in Heaven and Earth, and under the Earth, that is, the whole Creation without exception of any part of it: *He only is excepted which did put all things under him,* 1 Cor. 15. 27. By vertue of which power he is constituted and appointed *heir of all things,* Heb. 1. 2. *He is Prince of the Kings of the Earth,* Rev. 1. 5. *Nay Angels, Principalities and powers,* both the powers of Heaven and Hell are made subject unto him; *He hath the keys of Hell and death,* Rev. 1. 18. that is, full power to save and destroy. And can there be any greater. Upon this account the Socinians in the interpretation of these Texts, acknowledge the Empire of Christ to be universal, unlimited, and from which no creature is excepted. That his power is so absolute and perfect, that *a superiori nullis certis limitibus circumscripta est.* That it, first and immediately indeed respects the Church, but for the sake of that, *cetera omnia,* all things else, which are subject to his pleasure; which are managed and governed, *solo ejus nutu ac verbo,* by his single nod and word. Let him but utter his voice, or in the

etiam super mortem & Diabolum adeptus est, Wolzogen. Comment. in Matth. cap. 28. v. 18. *E quibus omnibus liquido patet, potestatem istam Christo communicatam pro sua esse divinam, quæ se super omnia (solo tantum Deo excepto) extendit,* Ibid. *Judicare mundum est proprium Dei opus, verum nunc sub novo sedere potestatem judicandi mundum plane & in totum Deus Christo filio suo commisit, adeoque eum dominum omnis creaturæ in cælo & in terra constituit,* Id. cap. 1. 5. Johan. v. 22. *Per sessionem Christi ad dextram patris tam perfecta designatur potestas, quæ à superiori potestate nullis certis limitibus circumscripta est,* Idem in v. 23. ejusd. cap. *Sedere ad dextram Dei dicitur, quatenus absoluta potestate in Dei populum, & propter hunc in cetera omnia gaudet, adeo ut auctore Paulo, Deo patri subiectus non sit, sed pro suo arbitrio ac voluntate, in iis omnibus quæ legibus divinis plane definita non sunt, cuncta gubernet.* Crell. in Epist. ad Heb. cap. 1. v. 3. *Illa subjectio omnium rerum sub pedes Christi, ad res præter Deum omnes nulla excepta refertur,* Id. ad Epist. primam ad Corinth. cap. 15. ver. 25.

1 *Christus ferebat omnia, quatenus omnia ad ejus nutum ac placitum movebantur: nihil erat quod ejus imperio non cederet, non pareret. Ferebat omnia potenti suo verbo, non magno aliquo conatu & molimine opus fuit ut Christus omnia moveret; solo nutu ac verbo cuncta peragebat: quod plane divinum est, & merito is qui id facit, Dei ipsius character & effigies nominatur. Talis nullus hominum extitit, qui virtute in se semper residente quotiescunque vellet, cuncta unico suo nutu ac verbulo moveret.* Id. in Epist. ad Hebr. loc. prius cit.

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least manner intimate his pleasure, and then all the world immediately submits to his orders, and complies with his commands.

The last difficulty with which the *Socinian* opinion concerning the *falsitious divinity* of Christ is chargeable, is, that thereby as they separate the *divine perfections*, so they do *divine worship and adoration* from the divine nature; in direct opposition both to right reason, natural religion, and express revelation. And thereby plainly lay the foundations of *Idolatry*, and open the doors for it to enter into the Christian Church. Now the danger of *Idolatry* is both acknowledged, and extremely aggravated by the *Unitarians* on all hands. *Socinus* saith, that it is highly dishonorable to God, and destructive to the Souls of men; 'forasmuch as no *Idolater* can enter into the Kingdom of God. The *English Unitarians* say, that to worship any other person besides the one true God, and to make him the object of our praise, love, faith, devotion, &c. (as the *Socinians* do Christ, tho he be not in their opinion that one true God) or ascribe to the Gods of our own devising as they phrase it, that is, to any Creature, the glory of the incommunicable properties; viz. infinite wisdom, power, goodness: That this detracts from the glory of God,¹ and is next door to *Atheism*.² That it is a sin of so heinous a nature, that it plainly dissolves the Covenant between God and man; and consequently, that they who are guilty of it, are in a desperate condition, out of the reach of mercy, and can have no hopes of it, which are only grounded upon that Covenant.

Now if a man were to govern himself by the writings and opinions of these persons, he would find himself reduced to

¹ Quod ad me attinet, nullum mihi est dubium quin illi omnes sive Calviniani, &c. qui se ad præscriptum Christi gesserint celestis vitæ Hereditatem adituri sint. De Papiis idem affirmare nolim, quos omnes hodie Idololatrias esse statuo. Novi vere, neminem Idololatrarum salutis æternæ compotem fore. Socin. Epist. ad And. Dudich. Tom. primo Oper. p. 502.

² Letter of Resolution concerning the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation p. 5, 6.

³ Reflections on two discourses of Mr. Lamoth. p. 8.

inextricable ſtreights. If you do not worſhip Chriſt, ſay the one, *you deny him to be the Meſſiah*, and thereby turn Apoſtates from the Chriſtian Religion. But if you do pay divine honors to him, you do in effect renounce all religion, *and are next door to Atheiſts*. Now ſince they are ſo poſitive and peremptory in this matter, and that the danger of reſuſing divine honor to Chriſt on one hand, and that of paying it to him, if he be but a meer creature, is really ſo great on the other; the concluſion that every one ſhould draw from theſe different opinions of theirs, is, that the ſtating and ſettling the right object of divine worſhip is a matter of great conſequence, in which the honor of God, and the Salvation of mens Souls is nearly concerned. And therefore that it will behoove us all to enquire not only into the *offices*, but likewise into the *nature* of Chriſt; which will render *faith in his perſon*, as we ſaid in the beginning of this diſcourſe to be not only a duty, but a neceſſary duty, without which we cannot in point either of prudence or ſafety govern our actions with relation to him. If we are required to pay divine honors to him, the queſtion that will naturally ariſe from hence, will be, whether he be the right and lawful object of religious adoration? Otherwiſe we may before we are aware be guilty of Idolatry, which is a crime of ſo high a nature, that no wiſe man, would venture upon any action that might carry the leaſt ſuſpicion that way, without mature deliberation, and clear and full ſatisfaction about it. Now if he be truly and really God, then it is certain that we may, nay that we muſt pay him divine honors. But if he be not, then it will be as certain, from the dictates of right reaſon, and much more ſo from expreſs and clear revelation, that we ought not to worſhip him; becauſe we cannot do ſo, without an open and bold violation of the laws of God, and thereby apparently incurring the guilt of Idolatry.

And if any man ſhall pretend to be ſatisfied of the contrary, by thoſe ſhuffling and ambiguous answers of *Socinus*, and thoſe ſenſeleſs and arbitrary diſtinctions which are made uſe of by him upon this occaſion, by which both *Popiſh* and *Pagan* Idolatry may in great meaſure be juſtified; I ſay he that can re-

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ceive satisfaction in this affair by these means, against the solemn and reiterated declarations of God expressed in Scripture; for my part I cannot think any such person, can have any great concern for the *honor of God*, or the *reputation* of the Christian religion, notwithstanding the pretences which may be made to the contrary.

I know it will be here said in behalf of the *English Unitarians*, that they are not concerned in this charge: because as they acknowledge Christ to be only a man, so they believe and declare that divine honors are not due to him. I know they do so, and thereby it is plain that they are more consistent with themselves, and act more agreeably to their principles than *Socinus* and his followers. But yet for all this, they are to be told, that their opinions and practices with relation to our Savior are full of *danger* to themselves, and infinitely *offensive and scandalous* to all others. There being no sect or party of men this day in the world, besides themselves and their partisans, who own *Jesus to be the Messiah*, who do not likewise make him the object of religious invocation and worship: so that hereby they justly come under the same censure which the Apostle passes on the Jews 1 Thes. 2. 15. *that they please not God*, who strictly requires *that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father*, Jo. 5. 23. *and are contrary to all men*, that is all who profess the name of Christ.

It is true indeed whilst they are under this persuasion, that Christ is not God, they cannot honestly nor with a good conscience adore and worship him, because it were Idolatry in them so to do. But then they ought to consider that as they are not *Idolaters*, so on the other hand they cannot be styled *Christians*: nay *Socinus* wonders how they can have the impudence to pretend to that name: who by denying divine honors to Christ, at the same time disown him to be the *Messiah*. And withall he affirms¹, that no opinion can be contrived, or thought on, which is more execrable and pernicious to the Christian religion than this of theirs. Upon which account he cautions every body from keeping company, or having *quicquam commercii, cum iis qui tantæ blasphemiae suspecti sunt*, any

¹ Loco prius citato. p. 61.

any thing to do with such *blasphemous wretches*; who in his opinion, deserve not only to be excommunicated out of the Church, but likewise (if we may judge of the meaning of that former expression by his behavior towards *Francis David*) to be exterminated out of all Christian states and societies. This may be thought too heavy a censure, but they must thank *Socinus* for it; and therefore if in this, that wise and crafty man, the great promoter of moderation and indifference in the affairs of Religion, did not act agreeably to his own principles, (as such designing men seldom do) let them on the other hand, pass what censure they think fit upon him for it. I shall leave them to debate that matter among themselves at their leisure.

Hitherto we have spoken only of two of Christs offices, *viz.* his *Prophetical and Regal*, and have shewed that they are clear proofs of his Divinity. It remains now in the third place, that we should consider him as a *Priest*; and then we shall find that he could not execute the several parts of his Priestly office except he were God as well as man. And particularly, that the Sacrifice which he was to offer, and the punishment which he was to undergo for the sins of the world did necessarily require it. For he was to stand in the room of sinners, and consequently to undergo the punishment due to their sins. Which he accordingly underwent, whereby *divine Justice* was so fully satisfied, and so *perfect a compensation* made for the injury done to the honor and authority of God by the transgression of his Laws; that neither his hatred against sin, nor high displeasure against sinners: neither the sanction of his Laws, nor his veracity which might be concerned in the execution of them: lastly, that neither his authority and government, nor his justice which was obliged to take care of it; could now any longer be an obstacle to the pardon of sinners: because our Savior underwent that punishment which the Law threatned, and their sins deserved.

When I say that our Savior suffered the punishment due to us; I do not mean strictly *idem*, the same in kind; for *that* he neither did nor could undergo: but *tantundem*, that which was *tantamount*, because of equal value, and therefore every way suf-

ficient for the atonement of justice and expiation of sin. Now no creature, no finite being, either Man or Angel, could suffer a punishment that was *equivalent* to the guilt and demerit of mankind. And therefore if Christ did so, he must be God as well as man. The consequence is unavoidable: We must therefore endeavor to make it out that the sufferings of our Savior were of this sort, which will be abundantly proved from these three following considerations. *1st.* Of the *end and design* of those sufferings. *2dly*, of their own *intrinsic worth and dignity*. *3dly*, of the *event and consequence* of them, whereby it will appear that they did not only *equal* but indeed *preponderate* the guilt of the whole world.

First, if we consider the *end* of those sufferings, we shall find one of the principal designs of God in them was, that he might declare to the whole world, his implacable detestation of sin and his high displeasure against sinners; and thereby deter men effectually from the practice of it. The former he could not more clearly demonstrate, *viz.* his hatred of sin, than by *punishing* it so severely in the person of his own son: as is evident from those places of Scripture, which mention the sufferings of our Savior, as proceeding from a *judicial act* of God, shewing his displeasure against sin, and *condemning* it thereby. Hence it is said that *he would not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us all*, Rom. 8. 32. Giving the world hereby an amazing instance both of his compassion to men, and of his indignation against sin, that he would not *spare, I say, his own son*, when he appeared in our likeness and with our sins. For *God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*, v. 3. of that ch. That is, in those sufferings which Christ sustained in his flesh, or body upon the Cross, God *passed sentence* upon sin and *condemned* it, and thereby discovered his justice, and demonstrated his displeasure against it.

This indeed, notwithstanding the plain declarations of Scripture, is denied by the *Socinians*; but is acknowledged by *Episcopius* and his followers, who otherwise in conjunction with the *Socinians* are the violent impugnors of the Doctrine of our Savior's *satisfaction*: I mean a true and plenary satisfaction made
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to the justice of God ; which they do not only disown, but endeavor likewise to expose under the contemptible name of the doctrine of Equivalents.

Now let us consider what God had formerly done in order to shew his hatred of sin, and thereby to discourage and affright men from the commission of it. Not to mention the remarkable punishments which have overtaken *particular persons*, or those more publick testimonies of his displeasure, against *societies and communities*, by sending among them *fire and sword, famine and pestilence, earthquakes and inundations* whereby states and Kingdoms have been overturned, Cities laid waste, and Countries made desolate ; I shall only instance in some of those eldest and earliest discoveries of Gods fury and indignation against sinners, which are recorded in Scripture, and designed as a warning to all succeeding ages of the world.

First, He rained fire and brimstone out of Heaven, and thereby turning the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, he condemned them with an overthrow, who are set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, 2 Pet. 2. 6. Jude v. 7. *2dly*, As he destroyed those Cities by fire, so he did the old world by water, bringing a flood upon those ungodly wretches, and thereby extinguished the whole race of mankind, except Noah and his family who were saved in the Ark. *3dly*, For the transgression of Adam, he curst the whole Earth, and brought mortality upon him and all his posterity. For as the violent destruction of the old world, so the natural death of all mankind, is the punishment of sin, in which we may read Gods high displeasure against it. *For by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and thereby judgment came upon all men to condemnation*, Rom. 5. 12. 18. *Lastly*, The numerous company of Apostate Angels, who revolted from their maker, are thereby become the dreadful instances of his implacable vengeance against sin,

1 In eo errant (de Contraremonstrantibus loquitur) quam maxime, quod velint redemptionis pretium per omnia æquivalens esse debere miseria illi, à qua redemptio fit, Limb. Lib. 3. Theol. Christ. Cap. 21. Sect. 8. *Æquivalens hic concipi non potest nisi juxta acceptationem Dei*, Sect. 8.

for they who kept not their first state of integrity, were forced at the same time to quit their first habitations: being tumbled down into those lower regions, where they are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness into the judgment of the great day, 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude v. 6. All these are clear and unquestionable indications of Gods high displeasure against obstinate sinners. And yet we must affirm, that no one of these, nor all of them put together, do in so eminent a manner discover Gods hatred of sin, as doth the punishment of our Savior, when he stood in the place, and suffered in the room of sinners.

That God should overthrow the Cities of the plain, destroy the old world, turn Adam out of Paradise, and both him and all his posterity afterwards out of the world. That he would not spare those once glorious spirits, who kept not their first estate, are remarkable instances, as we said before, of his justice. Yet that God should not spare his own son, is a much clearer and greater demonstration and proof of it. The former instances may justly awaken our fears, but the latter must preclude all hopes of impunity. For who can be so foolish as to entertain any thoughts of escaping punishment, since it overtook the son of God himself.

In short, nothing can so effectually encrease mens horror against sin, and deter them from the practice of it, as the consideration of those sufferings which our Savior underwent upon the account, and for the expiation of it. In them we have the greatest instance of Gods indignation, and not only so, but of his wisdom likewise, that ever was discovered to the world. Other examples of Gods justice tho very dreadful, yet were such as did not exceed a finite invention: but this was purely the contrivance of Heaven, at which both men and Angels justly stand astonished. They pry and search into this mystery, but the farther they search, the more they admire, and return

¹ *Iustitiam suam Deus ostendit, quia sacrificium illud peragi noluit, nisi cruenta ac maledicta morte dilecti atque innocentis filii sui Jesu Christi, tanquam victimæ piacularis pro peccato. Quo enim clariore documento odium suum erga peccatum demonstrare potuit, quam quod noluerit illud remittere, nisi intercedente tam sumesta uni-geniti sui filii morte?* Limb. Lib. 3. Cap. 10. Sect. 4.

from this enquiry only with wonder and amazement. Here we have the *liveliest Ideas* of the guilt of sin, and of Gods displeasure against it; for after all former, and beyond all future examples of divine vengeance, the justice of God is most conspicuous in the *death of his son*. And therefore his death, must not only *equal*, but *outdoe* the death and sufferings of all mankind; yea and of all the Apostate Angels into the bargain. Here then I think we may set our foot, and rest as upon sure ground, and therefore may safely and warrantably pronounce, *that God could not do more to testify his displeasure against sin, and to discountenance the practice of it, than to make his only son an offering for sin, and to give him up to those sorrows and sufferings which he underwent for our sins, and for our sakes.*

And hereby God hath taken the most effectual care, for to secure his Authority and Government in the world; and to discourage and affright men from the violation of his laws. But this end of Christs sufferings looks only *forwards*, but we must likewise look *backwards*, and consider God as one *highly incensed*, and his *justice provoked* by the sins of men. And therefore before he will be reconciled to them, we may reasonably imagine, that some way was to be found out, to appease his wrath, and pacify his indignation; and this was another end of Christs sufferings, *viz. 2dly, to satisfy the justice of God*, which he did by standing in the place of sinners, undergoing the malediction of the Law, and suffering the punishment which the law threatned, and their sins deserved.

For the proof and confirmation of this, I must be forced in some measure to repeat what hath formerly been delivered upon this occasion. And 1st, I must affirm what I think hath formerly been sufficiently proved, that the sufferings of our Savior were *properly a punishment*. This we must insist upon as upon a matter of great importance, without which we cannot rightly apprehend the nature and design of Christs death, and without which he could not perform the errand upon which he came into the world. For the great end of

his coming, and taking our nature upon him was, that he might *dye for sinners*, and lay down his life in *the room*, and in *exchange* for theirs. This is denied not only by the *Socinians*, but likewise by the *Remonst.* which one might justly wonder at: because they thereby clearly overthrow their own concessions concerning the reason and ends of Christs sufferings.

For first they tell us that he suffered not only upon our account, or for our benefit, as the *Socinians* exprefs it, but likewise in our stead: That his death was a *proper Sacrifice*, that his life was *the price* of our redemption, which was paid down for us, that we thereby might be freed from the guilt of sin, and the obligation to suffering: That he was made a *curse* by undergoing an accursed death for us: which clearly demonstrates a permutation and exchange of persons: we sinned and deserved punishment, and he underwent that death which we had deserved. None of which can be true, if the death and sufferings of Christ were not properly a punishment.

In *expiatory Sacrifices*, the guilt of the criminal was transferred upon the Sacrifices, which thereby became accursed and devoted to destruction. If Christ stood in our room, and underwent the sentence of the Law; then he must undergo a punishment; because what the law threatens must be a punishment, or otherwise we can have no notion of it. If there were a permutation of persons, then he must suffer what otherwise would have lighted upon us; which was death, and that

1 Vid. Limb. Th. Christ. Lib. 3, Cap. 22. Sect. 2. Potest Christus certo sensu dici loco nostro punitus, quatenus panam vicariam, pro beneplacito divino sibi imponendam, hoc est, afflictionem, quæ panæ vicem sustinuit, in se suscepit.

2 Nostra sententia hæc est, quod Jesus Christus fuit sacrificium verum ac propriè dictum pro peccatis nostris. Tullis pro nobis ac nostro loco gravissimam afflictionem, atque ita panam commertam à nobis avertit. Idem Ibid. Christus factus maledictio pro nobis, quia maledictam crucis mortem in se suscipiens, maledictionem quæ nobis debebatur à nobis abstulit, & in se quasi derivavit. Sanguis Christi fuit redemptionis pretium, quod pro nobis persolutum est, ut à peccatorum reatu liberemur, Id. eod. Lib. Cap. 20. Sect. 9. Et egregiam hic personarum commutationem denotat vocula eod., quæ Christum loco nostro afflictum docet: nos siquidem peccaveramus, & ira divine reatum contraxeramus; Deus nobis præteritis, filio suo diram ac cruentam mortem imponit, quæ nos affici merueramus.

death was the punishment of sin. His blood was shed instead of ours, his life went in exchange for our lives; and why was all this done, but to satisfy the Law, which threatned and required punishment, and that punishment he underwent in our stead, who were thereby freed from the obligation to it? I am ashamed to use so many words in so plain a case.

And yet for all this, Christ must not be said to be punished for us, but to undergo that which was *vice pæne*, instead of punishment. If so, then Christ was not truly a *Sacrifice*, but he was *vice sacrificii*, he served in the room of one; and was not substituted properly *loco nostro* in our place, (as hitherto we have been taught) but *loco sacrificii*, in the place and instead of a Sacrifice. His blood was not the *price* of our redemption, but was given *vice pretii*, instead of a ransom. He dyed for us, and gave *his life a ransom* ἀντὶ πάντων, for many or all, *Matth. 20. 28.* where the word ἀντὶ, is allowed to denote a *permutation*; but at this rate, it must denote not only an *exchange of persons*, but likewise a *change* of the sufferings: we were to be *punished*, and he was only *afflicted* for our sakes. It is true in such cases the nature and kind of the punishment may be altered, but yet so, as that what one man undergoes in the room of another, must still be a *punishment*, or else the end and design of that permutation is wholly frustrated and defeated.

And so indeed it is too much, (in the case before us) by this account of *Limb.* who tho sometimes¹ he tells us plainly and roundly that *Christ took all the guilt of sinners upon himself, and suffered the punishment due to them* eorum loco, *in their place and stead*: yet all this is done with a reservation. For when he comes to declare his true sense of this matter, then he affirms that Christ was not truly made a Curse for us, (tho the Scriptures in expresse termes say so) but *Christus maledictionem quæ nobis debebatur in se quasi transtulit*. He was not properly punished in our stead, but *pœnam peccatis nostris commeritam quasi² in se*

¹ Id. Lib. 3. Cap. 10. Sect. 4. *Impromeritum quidem amorem ergo peccatores testatur Dominus Jesus, seu sponsor, quod omnia eorum peccata in se transferat, eorumque pœnas ipsorum loco pendat.* ² Ibid. Sect. 5. & 9.

derivavit. Christ shed his blood for us, which was not truly a price, but *tanquam redemptionis pretium*¹. God was well pleased with the obedience which his Son shewed in dying for us, and this he accepted of not as a real satisfaction, but *tanquam plenariam satisfactionem pro peccatis nostris*: and so at long run, with these *tanquams* and *quasis* the whole work of our redemption as it is delivered in the Scriptures, and believed by the Catholick Church, may be in danger of being undermined. For at this rate we may be forced at length to say, that Christ did not truly redeem us from guilt, but *quasi redemit*; did not truly reconcile us to God, but *quasi reconciliavit*; was not truly and properly a Savior, but *tanquam servator*.

Again 2dly, They acknowledge that the reason of Christs sufferings for us, was, that thereby God might testify his hatred of sin, and his indignation against sinners, as was said before. But how could this be discovered I beseech you, if those sufferings were only *afflictions and calamities*, which if considered in themselves, barely as such, are so far from being arguments of Gods indignation, that on the other hand they *may be*, nay indeed in that case allways *are* consistent with his *greatest affection* to those persons who are thus rendred calamitous? But on the other hand in *punishment*, the anger of God is very clearly manifested, which thereby becomes a very proper means to discourage men from sinning. The Law that prescribes men their duty, threatens the violation of it with punishment; and when this sentence is executed upon Malefactors, then every man in such execution may read his own doom, which if any thing can, will deterre them from the like practises.

But if we see an innocent person afflicted and rendered miserable; forasmuch as this doth not suppose the transgression of any Law, as the cause of such misery, it can be no argument of Gods displeasure; nor consequently any restraint upon

¹ Ibid. Sect. 9. Idem Cap. 19. Sect. 2. ³ Peccatum Deo adeo ingratum est, ut illius reatum non nisi hostia adeo eximia tolli voluerit, propriumque plium illius abolitioni impenderit; qui enim adeo detestatus est peccatum, multo gravius gratia sua contentum, fuderisque novi violationem vindicaturus est. Id. Cap. 23. Sect. 18.

men, to hinder or deterre them from sinning. Nay on the other hand, this is so far from deterring men, that to wicked minds it often becomes an occasion, and proves an encouragement to sin.

Perhaps it will be said, that these sufferings which Christ underwent, tho they were only afflictions, yet were inflicted on him upon *the account*, and for *the sake* of our sins, which were the meritorious cause of them. For we sinned, and he became miserable in our room. Be it so, but then we must ask, are not calamities, and especially death, when sent *for the sake* and upon *the account* of sin, properly punishments? If not, then we have lost the true signification of words; and those Gentlemen who are of that opinion, must contrive to alter our language, before we can consent to make this alteration in our Religion.

By all this it plainly appears that the sufferings of Christ were *properly a punishment*. And if so, it must as plainly follow in the second place, that these sufferings proceeded from the *justice of God*, and were designed to give satisfaction to it. There being a necessary and an essential relation between these two, *viz. punishment and justice*. This latter being the next and immediate principle and faculty, if I may so say, from whence the former proceeds. For it is not *wisdome*, or *righteousness*, as that speaks Gods holyness and the rectitude of his nature; nor yet *bare power* considered in it self, to which punishments are to be ascribed. For tho all these may be concerned and are manifested in the punishment of sinners; yet they are not the next and formal principle to which they are to be attributed. For if they were, then every person endued with wisdom, or virtue, or might and strength, might be supposed empowered to punish a malefactor, which yet we know they are not.

For the better understanding of this matter, we may consider sin under a double respect. *1st*, As being opposite to the immaculate *purity and holyness* of God. *2dly*, As being contrary to his *Laws*, of which sin is the violation or transgression. The first is an opposition to the *nature*, and the second to the *authority* of God. In both cases sin is an *impurity*, and therefore we

may consider the sinner under a double defilement thereby. The first is properly called the *filth and pollution* of his nature, which is really deformed and stained by sin. The second is *guilt*, or an obligation to punishment. Now if we could imagine that God could send a creature endued with reason into the world, and not prescribe him Laws for the government of his actions, but leave him at liberty to act as he pleased: yet in this case, we must suppose that his reason would, tho not *command*, yet *direct him* to act suitably to the dignity and constitution of his nature.

For there are certain decencies which arise from the natures of rational creatures and their relation to each other. And if a man should act contrary to those dictates of his nature, he would contract a defilement thereby, *viz.* from that *natural and essential turpitude* which would be in those immoral actions; as being directly contrary to the rectitude and purity of Gods nature, which is the grand *rule and standard* by which his own actions are governed; and therefore must much more be a *rule* for the actions of all other rational creatures. And the *turpitude* of such actions would render the persons committing them odious and detestable in the sight of God; who by virtue of that *sovereign power* which he hath over his Creatures, might shew his abhorrence of them by suitable actions, as we would our abhorrence of Toads and Serpents. That is, he might tread them under his feet, crush them to pieces, or spurn them out of his presence, as we would the most venomous or loathsome Creatures. And there is nothing in all this but what is very agreeable to that universal and essential justice in God, whereby he not only hates all vice and immorality, but likewise at the same time, and for the same reason detests the persons who practise it. But yet all this would only be an instance of his *abhorrence*, which would be justified by that *absolute dominion* which he hath over his Creatures. And as such a defilement in the present case could not properly be called *guilt*; so neither would those actions of displeasure properly be styled *punishment*: which allways hath relation to the violation of a Law.

And therefore *adly*, we must consider all rational Creatures

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as under the *obligation of a Law*, whereby their duty is prescribed to them under certain penalties, which are threatned to all such as shall transgress it. For tho in point of speculation we may, and must sometimes distinguish between Gods *universal righteousness*, and his *Jurisdiction*; yet in fact they can never be separated: because this *righteousness* with relation to rational creatures, will allways and necessarily be joined with *authority and legislation*. It would be an infinite derogation to the wisdom and righteousness of God, to suppose, that he could leave rational creatures without laws for the Government of their actions: because this were to suppose a *God* without a *providence*, which were the next door to *Atheism*, and that thro which it must inevitably enter into the world.

And as all rational creatures must necessarily be under the direction and obligation of Laws, so those laws must be enforced by certain *sanctions*, otherwise they would loose their nature, and be no other nor better than wholesome counsel and good advice. And lastly, as the laws must be enforced by threatnings, so we must suppose something in every legislator, that *moves and inclines him* to execute those threatnings upon such as shall transgress his Laws. And this is as necessary as the former: because, as the laws would be ineffectual without *sanctions*, so those sanctions would be equally insignificant, without such an *inclination* in the legislator to put them in execution. The execution it self indeed may be stopped for some very weighty reasons. But the *general disposition* and inclination to execute them must be supposed; otherwise, let the threatnings be never so severe, and the declarations to punish uttered in never such high and peremptory expressions, no man would be under the terror of them, so as to be affrighted thereby from sinning. And these are things that are to be found in all *Laws*, and all *Lawgivers*, whether *Humane* or *Divine*, the reason being the very same and common to them all.

Now that *attribute* whether in God or Men, that is concerned in the execution of threatnings, is not, as I said before, *power*

¹ See the preservative 1st. part. p. 34 &c.

or *wisdom* or *universal righteousness*, (which in men is but another name¹ for virtue, and comprehends all particular virtues within its compass, which, are but several parts and branches of it;) but *Justice*, which from the effect of it is called *punitive*, because it discovers it self in punishing offenders. And this justice as it constitutes a particular *virtue* in men, so for the same reason, it must be considered by us as a distinct *attribute* in God.

For the farther confirming and clearing of this whole matter, I shall endeavor to make good these following particulars. *1st*, That there is such a thing as *punitive justice* in God. *2dly*, That the punishments which he inflicts procede from that justice, and among other ends, are designed for the discovery and satisfaction of it. Nay sometimes they have no other end but this. *3dly*, That the sufferings of our Savior for the sins of men, did fully and perfectly satisfy this Justice.

1st, That there is such a thing in God as *punitive Justice*; I mean as distinct from that *universal justice* or righteousness of his nature, of which the former is a part. For general justice as *Grotius*² rightly observes, as it is conversant about different objects, hath different effects, and therefore hath different names. As it is conversant about the moral actions of rational agents, it discovers it self in *retribution*, and the effects of it with relation to evil actions are *punishments*. And therefore as this justice in men, is defined by the ancients³ to be *τιμωρίας ἀπαιτήσις*, that which requires and demands punishment; so this Justice of God, as is rightly observed by *Grotius*⁴, is that property which *moves and enclines him to punish sin*, and which is declared and manifested thereby.

When we say God is thereby *moved or enclined* to punish, we must not fancy any such *transient motions or inclinations* in him, as are to be found in men, which are taken up and laid down

¹ Εἰς τὴν συναντικειμένην ἀρετὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, Theogn.

² Lib. de Satisf. Cap. i.

p. 33. ³ Hierax. apud Stobæum de Just. Serm 9.

⁴ Illa Dei proprietates quæ Deum movet ad peccata puniendâ, & quæ in ipsa peccatorum punitione demonstratur. Grot. Ibid.

upon occaſion. Such indeed are very fooliſhly and impiouſly aſcribed to God by the *Socinians*; I ſay impiouſly, becauſe they are inconfiſtent with his divine wiſdome and perfections. But by that phraſe we mean the *anger and diſpleaſure* of God towards ſinners, ariſing from a juſt and great provocation, which will certainly end in their puniſhment, except for ſome weighty reaſon he ſhall think fit to ſuſpend it, by which his glory may be more illuſtrated than in the puniſhment. And this *inclination* in God is *natural*, ariſing from his implacable hatred of ſin, and is neceſſarily ſuppoſed in the threatnings annexed to his Laws, without which thoſe threatnings, as we before obſerved, would be inſignificant.

Upon which account the light of nature, antecedent to any poſitive declaration of his purpoſe, directed men to apprehend this in God, *viz.* that he was highly diſpleaſed with them for their ſins, and would certainly be revenged upon them, except they could find out ſome way to appeaſe his anger, and divert his indignation. Indeed if we ſpeak ſtrictly, God is neither *angry* nor *appeaſed*, neither *provoked* nor *pacified*; his infinite perfections placing him out of the reach of ſuch mean paſſions as are to be found in men. But when we ſpeak of God we muſt do it in ſuch a way as is agreeable to our own ſhallow and imperfect conceptions of his nature (provided that we do not thereby derogate any thing from his perfections) otherwiſe we muſt neither think nor ſpeak of him at all. And therefore, in the ſame ſenſe that we ſay that God is *angry* or *provoked*, we muſt ſay that God is *moved* to do that which mens ſins provoke him to do, (that is to puniſh them) and which he certainly will do if ſome great reaſon doth not interpoſe, and prevent the puniſhment. The *inclination to puniſh ſin*, we ſee, in God is natural, and therefore *punitive juſtice*, from whence that inclination proceeds, muſt be ſo too.

Indeed *univerſal righteouſneſs*, and this *particular juſtice* which is called *punitive*, in God are really one and the ſame thing. But ſo are all his other *Attributes* likewiſe, which are neither diſtinguiſhed from his nature, nor from each other, by any real diſtinction. But forasmuch as we cannot fully and at
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this righteousness, that 'obstinate and incorrigible sinners should not escape unpunished. But yet so, that this punishment doth not proceed *from the justice, and displeasure of God*, but from *his will*, and is only the result of an arbitrary, and mutable Decree. But enough of this.

But 2dly as there is such a thing as *punitive Justice* in God, so the *punishments* which he inflicts upon sinners, flow from it; and are among other ends designed for the discovery and satisfaction of it. And in certain punishments no other end but this is intended and aimed at. Indeed in humane punishments the preservation of Government, and the benefit of the Commonwealth, which is thereby maintained and supported, is *principally*, and in most cases *only* aimed at. And this is the great rule and standard by which they are to be regulated: So that to equal sins, unequal punishments; and equal punishments, to unequal sins may be assigned, if the publick good so require. Nay not only the *distribution*, but the *suspension* likewise of punishments is to be regulated hereby. So that the most flagitious criminals, at least if the Law of God doth not otherwise interpose, may be suffered to escape unpunished, if their punishment be adjudged inconsistent with the *publick safety*.

And in these punishments, as we before intimated, Magistrates and Governors principally aim at the security of their Government, and therefore do not inflict them so much for *compensation* of what is past, (except it be in case of *injury and damage*, strictly so called, which either the publick or private persons sustain thereby, in which cases, common reason and equity will allow a recompense to be made to the injured party) as to prevent the like crimes for the future. But in divine punish-

I Interim baudquaquam negamus, Dei justitiam ac rectitudinem, ut in ceteris omnibus ipsius operibus, ita etiam in panis cerni, earumque modum gubernare; deinde nec illud negamus, rectitudinem ac justitiam Dei nonnunquam eum ad peccata puni- enda movere: eorum nempe, quibus veniam non concedere non modo aequitati per se est admodum consentaneum, verum etiam decretis divinis, ut ita loquar, debitum; quales sunt homines non respicientes atque in peccatis consumaciter perseverantes, quemadmodum Socinus ipse eo loco, quem Grotius notavit, (Lib. scil. 1. de Christo Serv. & Cap. 1.) docuerat. Crell. Resp. ad Cap. 1. Lib. Hug. Grot. de Satisf.

here was no mixture of compassion, no place left for repentance, no room for mercy, no intentions in God to pardon, no inclinations in them to desire or procure it. They are doomed to eternal obduration as well as torment. No spark of goodness being left, but all dispositions to it being totally and eternally extinguished.

Well, but tho these punishments can work no good upon themselves, were they not designed as *examples* thereby to deterre others? no they were not. Not to deterre men; for tho now their punishment is proposed in Scripture as a good means to affright men from disobedience, yet so far as both their *sin and punishment* was antecedent to the *Creation of man*, that could not be any reason or design of their misery and torments. Nor are they proposed as *examples* to the good Angels, who kept their *first estate*, and with it are immutably fixed in their *first habitations*, and the happiness which they enjoy in them. As a reward of their obedience, they were immediatly confirmed in their integrity, and are placed out of the reach of all temptation and possibility of sinning. Some indeed have thought otherwise, but their opinion in this matter, hath been censured and condemned by the generality of Divines both ancient and modern.

Either then we must say that their punishment is unjust, as being without any *good reason* to warrant it: or else we must allow that it was inflicted on them for the *discovery of Gods justice*, and the satisfaction of it; no other can be tolerably assigned or imagined but this.

2dly, The secret and *invisible punishments* of some obstinate sinners in this life, who by the righteous judgment of God, are delivered up to final obduration and impenitence, are a farther proof of our assertion. For they are not hereby made *examples* to deterre others, because this cannot be accomplished, but by *visible* at least, if not publick inflictions. Whereas in this case, that final obduration to which they are doomed, is not discernible by any humane eye, but is known only to God himself.

Lastly as such invisible punishments in this life, so the eter-

nal punishment of incorrigible sinners in the next, will be an irrefragable proof and demonstration of this matter : which will not be inflicted on them to prevent the violations of the Law for the future, but by way of compensation for what is past. *Here* indeed, in this life, in punishing God aims at the *support* of his Authority and Government ; but there, in the next, he designs only to *revenge* the contempt of it. That is, as *Grotius* before expressed it, *ideo punit ut puniat* ; he punishes for the sake of punishment. Not as that punishment is subservient to any external ends of Government, but only that thereby he may display the glories of his *holyness and power*, and particularly of his *justice*, which then will most eminently be conspicuous in the eternal miseries of the wicked.

Neither are the *ends and reasons* of those future punishments, to be taken, from the *threatnings and monitions* which are given men in this life. For tho this will be one greater aggravation of their guilt and misery than that of the *Apostate Angels*, viz. that they brought all this mischief upon themselves, by going on in a course of sinning, notwithstanding so many warnings, and the hopes of pardon joined to them, upon condition of their repentance and return ; yet, tho hereby they will be found infinitely to have *deserved* punishment, we must farther enquire for *what reasons* God will inflict it. For if no *good end* can be served by it, to be sure, notwithstanding their deserts, God will not in the conclusion impose that punishment. It is true God hath annexed threatnings to his Laws, and the end of those threats is to prevent the violation of them. But since the Law is violated, and the transgressors therefore to be punished, we must now enquire after the *end of the execution* as well as the *reason of the sanction*. For except not only a just, but some great end were to be served by these punishments, to be sure, as we intimated before, the God of all compassion, would never execute them in so terrible a manner upon his Creatures, as we are assured he will.

Now what ends I beseech you, can we assign of them *extra Deum*, as *Grotius* rightly states this matter. They cannot be designed for the *security of his Government*, or the *reformation of*
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the parties suffering, as was said before. Those reasons will then be at an end. We must therefore find a reason taken from somewhat in God himself. And this must be chiefly and principally his *Punitive Justice*, which will be then made illustrious, and he thereby be honored in the condemnation and execution of his enemies. Perhaps it may be said, that this will be done to discover and vindicate his *veracity*, he having often and peremptorily declared that he would thus punish all obstinate offenders.

It must be acknowledged indeed, that his *truth* is concerned in the execution of his threatnings. But this cannot be the *principal end*, nor strictly speaking any *end* at all. For tho God who hath annexed threatnings to his Laws, hath likewise annexed a declaration to those threatnings, of his *immutable resolution* to put them in execution: yet the reason of the execution it self is not barely to verify his word; for we cannot think that the merciful Creator of the world would make his creatures eternally miserable only, or chiefly because he hath declared he will do so: But he hath signified his *irrevocable purpose* of so doing; because his own glory, and particularly that of his justice will thereby be rendered illustrious to eternal Ages.

And in this is the remarkable difference between humane and divine vengeance, as we have intimated before; which latter will not be conducted, as we find it oftentimes is in men, by any *furios and ungovernable passions*; or proceed from *sudden and rash resentments* of real or pretended injuries: but from fixt and immovable resolutions in God to manifest and promote his own glory, which will be rendered illustrious in the condemnation of the wicked, as well as the rewards of the righteous. In the former God himself will take delight and pleasure; as well as in the latter: not because it is the misery of his *Creatures as such*, (far be it from us from entertaining any such thoughts as that of the merciful Creator, and righteous Judge of the world) but of *guilty and incorrigible creatures*, who would go on in an obstinate course of sinning without remorse, and against all monitions to the contrary. The justice of which

which proceeding, will be acknowledged by the parties themselves who are to suffer, and accompanied not only with the *approbation*, but the *applauses* and *acclamations* likewise of Saints and Angels. For the time will come when the meek and most indulgent Savior of mankind will ascend his Tribunal, before whom all Nations shall be assembled, and then he, whose bowels so often yearned over these sinners, will with a stern countenance and inflexible rigor pass sentence upon them. In which all the Saints, who shall then sit as *Assessors* with him on his Throne, shall join with him, together with his holy Angels, in whose sight as we said before, and with whose approbation all this shall be transacted.

This indeed is a *sad*, but a very *great truth*; and this we must insist upon, as a matter of great importance, without which we cannot give a satisfactory account of the justice and righteousness of Gods dealing with sinners at the great day. Besides, hereby we shall lay the most effectual restraint upon wicked men, and affright them from going on in an evil course; because if they do so, they hereby find that they must inevitably and eternally be miserable, without *hopes of mercy* or *possibility of escape*. For as the *certainity* of the sinners punishment doth appear from the threatening, which is peremptorily denounced by God, with an express declaration of his irrevocable purpose to execute it: so the *righteousness* of it will appear, from the consideration that *Gods glory* will be thereby manifested: the glory (as I said before) of his *holyness*, *power*, and particularly of his *justice* which will then take place, (the day of mercy, together with all hopes of it being now utterly ended) and will then be displayed in the eternal *perdition*, joined with the eternal *confusion* of all his enemies.

To proceed: in the third place we are to shew that the sufferings of our Savior did fully and perfectly satisfy the justice of God. The sufferings of Christ being a *punishment*, must as hath been already shewn, have relation to the *justice of God*, which did inflict it, and was plainly manifested and discovered by it. And that hereby a *full and plenary satisfaction* was made to that Justice, appears from the effect and consequence of his

his sufferings, *viz.* that God who before was angry with sinners, is now pacified and appeased. He is willing to enter into a Covenant of grace and mercy, whereby he engages himself to admit them into favor, and to be reconciled to them: provided they will perform such easy conditions as he shall require on their parts, *viz.* *faith and repentance*, which are no other than such as are absolutely necessary to qualify them for his favor. So that there is now nothing further required on *Gods part*, to move and dispose him to pardon sinners. All the obstacle of reconciliation is on *mans side*.

The Law threatened 'tis true, and men by sinning deserved punishment; but Christ stood in their room, and underwent what otherwise must have fallen upon their Heads. So that now a *sufficient compensation* being made to the honor of God, for those injuries which he sustained by the violation of his Laws; his justice doth now no longer interpose, to demand their punishment or hinder their pardon.

Perhaps it will be said, it is true indeed Gods justice is hereby *satisfied*, but this *satisfaction* doth not arise from the *sufferings of Christ*, considered in themselves, but from *divine grace and acceptance*. To which I answer, that the *divine acceptance* in this case is absolutely requisite, without which the death of Christ, tho it were of much greater value than it really is (if that were possible) could have no influence upon the pardon of sin: because God the Father who is considered as the principal party injured, might have demanded the lives of the criminals themselves, and have refused *any commutation* tho never so valuable. But supposing that God was willing so far to relax his Laws, as to accept of an *exchange* (as he did in this case) whereby his honor might be vindicated and his justice satisfied; I say the satisfaction thus made, doth depend upon the *worth and value* of the punishment it self which our Savior underwent in our stead, which *sua vi & efficacia*, by its own force and efficacy did expiate the sins of the world.

And wherein I pray you did its efficacy consist, but in this, that his life which he laid down was of *equal value* to the lives of all men which were forfeited to justice; and his death conse-

inward guilt, as well as the outward pollution, by any sacrifices, or by any other means and conditions such as he should freely and graciously appoint. Wherein then lies the difference in point of expiation, between the *sacrifices of the Law*, and the *oblation of Christ*; that one could *purge the Conscience* and *take away sin*, but the other could not? If all be resolved into divine appointment and pleasure; then I say it might equally be affirmed of the *blood of Christ*, (if considered in it self) as well as of that of *Calves and Goats*, that it could not *take away sin*, that it could not *make the comers to God perfect as pertaining to the Conscience*: nay that it was impossible it should do so. And on the other hand, upon the same supposition, it might be affirmed of the legal Sacrifices as well as of that of the Gospel, *viz.* if God had appointed them to that purpose (as they say he might) that *they did obtain eternal redemption for us*, that they did *take away sin*, that they did *sanctify*, not only to the *purifying of the flesh*, but likewise to the *purging of the Conscience from dead works*; and lastly that they *perfected for ever them that were sanctified and cleansed* thereby. And therefore that they needed not be reiterated year by year, *because the worshippers being thus once thoroughly purged, would have no more Conscience of sin*. These are things that would sound very oddly to any Christian ear. But yet these must be the unavoidable consequences of that opinion, which makes the efficacy of Christs death like that of the sacrifices under the law, to depend upon divine approbation and consent; for by this account they are put upon the same level as it were.

You will say, there is a vast difference still between them, which arises from the dignity and worth of *the person* of our Savior. As to what concerns the person of our Savior, the *Soci-nians* we know, do account him to be but a meer man as to his

pro quorum expiatione Deus illo tempore sacrificia admisit. Quidni & ex eadem voluntate Dei, sanguis Christi peccatis expiandis sufficiat? Limb Lib. 3. Cap. 22. Sect. 5. Ostendimus, ad redemptionem non requiri pretium per omnia aequale malo ac miserie & qua redemptio fit: sed tantum juxta estimationem illius cui pretium persolvendum est. Ille autem acquiescere potest quocunque pretio, quod ipse exigere potest, persoluto, Id. Cap. 21. Sect. 9.

nature; and withal assure us, that whatever strokes are laid upon a man, have no more force and virtue than if they were inflicted *bestie alicui*, upon any beast, *Ox or Asse, Horse or Camel*. So that whatever difference there may be otherwise between them, yet in this case, one hath no superiority or advantage above the other.

The Remonstrants indeed do say that he is *the son of God*, and God blessed for ever, (Tho I am afraid they call him so only in the Arian sense, viz. that he is a divine person, but inferior to his Father, both in *duration, power, and dignity*, which it is certain he cannot be, if he be *true God*, and *Consubstantial* with his Father,) and therefore that the dignity of his person doth add *pondus* *immensum*, a great weight to his sufferings. But then the question farther will be: whether the *dignity of his nature* did add any such *dignity to his sufferings*, so as, *sua vi & efficacia*, that by their own force and efficacy they could, and did expiate sin? no, they say it did not; the sacrifice which Christ offered was indeed *sufficient* for this purpose, but *his sufficiency*, notwithstanding the great worth and excellence of his nature, is to be resolved into the divine will and pleasure. God required no other nor greater price for the redemption of mankind, *sed in hac unica victima acquievit*; he did rest satisfied with this one oblation which Christ made of himself.

But if this be all that is to be owned concerning the satisfaction of Christ, we are but where we were before. And then the sacrifice of Christ, whatever other worth it might

1 Socin. de Christo Serv. par. 3. Cap. 4. See the second part of the Preserv. p. 128.

2 Curcellæus his opinion is very well known in this matter; which is approved of and vindicated by Limb. in his Preface to his works, whose sense of this matter may be farther seen in his Institutions, Lib. 2. Cap. 17. Sect. 25, 26. Where he asserts not only a subordination between the Father and the Son, which we likewise grant; but that the Son is inferior to his Father, and the Father consequently superior to the Son: *ævo, potentia, dignitate*. This he saith was the opinion of the Fathers of the first three Centuries: for proof of which he cites the Testimony and Confession of Dionysius Petavius which he mentions with approbation; who among other things tells us, that the aforesaid Fathers did believe the Son of God, *non minus quam cæteras creaturas initium habuisse; hoc est, minime ex æterno distinctam hypostasim habuisse, putarunt.* 3 Limb. Lib. 3. Cap. 22. Sect. 5.

acquire

acquire from the dignity of his nature, acquired no proper force and virtue to expiate sin; and therefore, (if so) we must say again, that in point of efficacy it did not exceed the sacrifices under the Law; and that his blood, if considered in it self, did not any more than that of Calves and Goats, take away sin; nay *ἀδυνατὶ ἀφαιρῆναι*, it was impossible it should do so. Which must needs be a harsh and unpleasing doctrine to any Christians ears, as we said before, which have been accustomed to another sort of sound.

On the other hand we think our selves obliged to affirm, that the death and sufferings of our Savior by their *own efficacy*, arising indeed from the infinite worth of his person, *did take away sin*, and *purge the Conscience* which was sensible of the guilt, and in great dread of punishment. And if you enquire wherein this efficacy did consist; we answer as we did before, it did consist in this, *viz.* That his sufferings for us, did bear a just proportion, and were equivalent to the sufferings and punishment of all mankind, and thereby he made a full, perfect and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. And this is that which the *Fathers of old* constantly affirmed; so that it is no new doctrine, but that which was always believed and maintained by the *Catholick Church*: as will appear by the following Testimonies, which, among a great many other that might be produced to this purpose, I have made choice of, as being very plain and full, and coming up to the point.

Among the works of St. Cyprian, are some treatises inserted, which are now generally acknowledged to be written by *Arnoldus* Abbot of *Bonneval*, styled *Carnotensis* from the *Diocese* in which that *Abby* was situated, wherein he speaks very fully on this Subject. Particularly in his Treatise *de septem verbis Novissimis à Christo in Cruce prolatis*, Cap. 1. He asserts, that our Savior substituted himself in our room, and voluntarily undertook that debt which he owed: And accordingly that God the Father who

1 Pro debitoribus debitorem se objecit. Et quod ex se non debebat, ultro debere non amavit; ideoque totius debiti summam ab eo qui pro omnibus se tradebat, exactor exegit.

required payment, exacted of him totius debiti summam, the whole debt, which he fully discharged. It was not the whole debt in kind, but it was the whole in a just construction of Law, because it was an equal value. But in his Treatise *De Ascensione Christi*, he expresses himself more plainly. *It is not to be doubted (saith he) but that the price which he laid down for us was so great, ut superaret negotium, that it exceeded what we owed: and the punishment which we were condemned to, and justly deserved, was not equal to the obedience and sufferings of Christ; which were therefore not only a sufficient, but a superabundant compensation for the damage sustained by our disobedience.*

Anselme who lived for some time in the same Century with him expresses himself to the same purpose, *That since no man can redeem his own Soul, by a full payment of what he owes, therefore Christ discharged that debt, & reddidit plus quam debetur, paid more then was owing.*

Perhaps it will be said, that it is no great matter what these, and the like Authors affirm of this matter, because they lived in that Age, when the foundations of *Scholastick Divinity* were laid in the *Latin Church*, whereby a great many *Metaphysical subtleties* were introduced into our Religion with which the *ancient Church* was unacquainted. It is true *Arnoldus* lived in the same Century with *Lombard*, and *Anselm* flourished in that preceding, viz. the 11th, and succeeded *Lafranc* in the See of *Canterbury*, who is said to be the first that began this way of writing in the *Western Church*, in imitation of what had been three ages before attempted by *John Damascen* in the *Greek*.

But this can be no prejudice to their opinion in this particular, because they hereby did not introduce any novel doctrine,

1 Tanto pretio damnatos redemit, ut dubium esse non possit, quin pretii magnitudo superaret negotium: nec equari potest damnum, quod omnino damnatio nostra meruerat, obedientie Christi quae gratis usque ad mortem progressa est, & ultro solvitur quod non debebat.

2 De Concept. Virgin. & peccato Origin. Cap. 12. Deus non exigit ab ullo peccatore plus quam debet: sed quoniam nullus potest reddere quantum debet, solus Christus reddidit pro omnibus qui salvantur, plus quam debetur.

which

which the former and better ages were not acquainted with: but did tread in the steps of their forefathers, and delivered what they found generally embraced by the whole Church, and which made up part of the faith of all sound Christians in these and former ages. And accordingly we find *Grotius* citing them among the other authorities which he produces from the Ancients, in defence of the *Catholic Faith* concerning the satisfaction of Christ. By which it appears that *Grotius* in his excellent Book on that subject, did not rest in the general notion concerning the expiation of sin, but intended such an expiation as was performed by a *plenary and ample satisfaction* made to the justice of God; such as these Authors owned, whose words he cites in confirmation of his own opinion. For we cannot imagine that *Grotius* could be so devoid of judgment, as to produce any testimonies that were *impertinent*, and much less such as were *inconsistent* with his own doctrine.

But to rise higher, and proceed to other testimonies which are more authentick. The great *Athanasius* hath written several Treatises concerning the *Incarnation and sufferings of our Savior*, in which he expresses himself plainly and fully upon this Subject. 'All men saith he, having ¹ sinned, all must dye; 'or else the Law which threatned death could not be fulfilled. 'But for as much as the greatness of the sin exceeded all the 'punishment which they could suffer; all mankind being unable and insufficient for this purpose: our Savior did voluntarily undergo *πάντην ἡμῶν πῦρ*, that very punishment, *καὶ τὰ ἡμῶν πῦρ*, and suffered what we deserved, and what 'otherwise must have lighted upon our Heads.

1 Ἰδὼν (de Christo Dei verbo loquitur) τὸ λογικὸν ἀπολλύμενον ἡμῶν, καὶ ὃ θάνατον καὶ αὐτῷ βασανίσοντα τῇ φύσει. Ὅρῶν δ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἀπειλὴ ἢ παραδόσις ἀλακρῆτος ἢ καὶ ἡμῶν φθορὰν καὶ ὅτι ἄσπον ἡμεῖς πικρὰ δύναι ἢ ἔμμεν λυθῆναι. Ὅρῶν δ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπων ὑπερδύναμις καὶ ἡμῶν. Ὅρῶν δ' οὐκ ἔστιν τὸ ἁπλοῦς πάντων ὅτι ἀνθρώπων πρὸς θάνατον, ἐκείνου τὸ γένος ἡμῶν, καὶ ὃ ἀδύναμις οὐκ ἐκείνου ἡμῶν, λαμβάνει ἐκ τῆς σῶμα, &c.
Athan. de Incarn. p. 60. Edit. Par.

2 Id. De Passione & Cruce Dom. p. 1002.

How

How could he undergo our punishment, or offer up those sufferings to his Father which otherwise would have overtaken us? were they the same in kind? no that they could not be. But they were the same in *worth*; and that not only by a gracious and favorable acceptation, but in a strict and proper valuation. For by standing in our stead and dying for us, he 'did τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων εὐλογεῖν, *quod æquum & rationi consentaneum erat patri præstare*, undergoe what was *just* for his father to demand, and *reasonable* for him to accept. What? was this a punishment *less* than what our sins had deserved, and what we otherwise should have suffered? how then could it be εὐλογον, agreeable to reason and justice. It is certain it could not be so in the opinion of *Athanasius*. For not to lay too great a stress on that word: it appears by the other expressions which he makes use of upon this occasion, that he thought the death of Christ, was not only of *equal value*, but *far exceeded* the sufferings and punishment of all mankind. 'For they could not do that which was sufficient to satisfy the justice of God; but *He*, 'and *He* 'alone was able to suffer for us; *He* only sufficient to 'mediate between God and man. Being to suffer in our stead, 'it was necessary that he should take upon him 'a body that in 'it he might be capable of dying, but that this Body might 'prove a *sufficient Sacrifice* 'ὥς ἀπὸ πάντων ἱκανὸν γένεσθαι τῷ θανάτῳ, it 'was united to the divine λόγος: and thereby became abundantly or if you please superabundantly sufficient for this purpose.

If the *sufficiency* of Christ's death in order to expiate sin, were to be resolved into divine pleasure and acceptation: *Athanasius* his way of reasoning upon this subject would have been extremely impertinent. For upon that account, the death of a Beast (as the *Socinians* and *Remonstrants* tell us, as we heard be-

1 Id. de Incarn. p. 60.

2 Μόνος ὡς σωτῆρος καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων παθεῖν, καὶ προσβούται ὡς πάντων ἱκανὸς ὡς πατήρ. De Incarn. p. 60.

3 Σωτηρὸν γὰρ ὁ λόγος, ὅτι ἄλλως ἐκ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων ἡ φύσις, εἰ μὴ διὰ τὴν πάντας ἀποθανεῖν, οὐκ οἶνεν τε διὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀποθανεῖν, ἀδύνατον οὐτα καὶ τὴν πατὴρ ὦν, τότε εἴη καὶ τὸ σωτῆρος ἀποθανεῖν ἱκανὸν λαμβάνει σῶμα. ibid. p. 61.

4 Ibid.

fore) and much more the sufferings of any eminent man, or glorious Angel, might have sufficed to have procured pardon for sinners. 'No, saith *Athanasius*, 'ἐκ ἄλλου ἢν, it was not in 'the power of any other, either Man or Angel, to redeem men 'from punishment, but only τὸ θεῶν λόγος, of that divine word 'which first made, he only did, and only could restore them. He 'saw and had compassion upon the forlorn condition of fallen, 'sinful man; and therefore he undertook to do that which was 'impossible else to be performed; and what was that? was it 'only to submit to punishment; no sure that could not be all; for others were capable of being punished as well as he. But he was farther to suffer a punishment that was equal to the guilt of men, and thereby to satisfy divine justice. 'For ἡ τῆς κακίας ὑπερβολὴ πᾶσαι τιμωρίαι ὑπερῆρε, the greatness of our guilt 'was such that it exceeded all finite punishments: But the son of 'God knowing τὴ ταυτὴ ἰκανότητα καὶ δυνάμει, his own strength and 'sufficiency; he submitted to death, and thereby + consummated 'the death of all men: and by offering his own body, ἀντίψυχον, 'as a sacrifice in their room, ἐπλήρωσεν τὸ ἐφειλόμενον, ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ: 'fully discharged their debt, whereby they become acquitted 'and free from that obligation.

Nay he did not only pay what was due, but by offering up his own life, gave that in exchange which far exceeded it: & μικρὰ μέγαλοις, *parva magnis compensavit*. How *parva*? what were those small things which were thus to be recompensed? why they were

1 Οὐκ ἄλλα ἢ διὰ τὸ γινώσκοντες ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπος ἀνεργησέν, ἢ τὸ θεῶν λόγος ἔδωκεν κατὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖον πιστοποιήσας αὐτὸς. *ibid.* p. 62. ἀλλὰ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ταύτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ ἐκ τῆς, ἢ μὴ τὸ εὐδὲς ἔπαυται. *ibid.* p. 66.

2 Ὅρῃν τὸ ἢ τὴ κακίας ἀνθρώπου, καὶ τὸ θανάτον γίνεσθαι ἐκ τῶν ἀποπτῶν αὐτοῦ τὴ δυνάμει ὡς τὴ τιμωρίαν τὴ κακίαν θανάτον ἀποδύναι. *Id. de passione & cruce Domini* p. 1002.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Τὸν διδόμενον θάνατον ὡς τὸ πάντων σωτηρίας ἔαυτον δὲ τιμωρίαν, καὶ ἄλλως δὲ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ θάνατον, ἀλλὰ τὸ τὸν ἀνθρώπον ἔλθαι τιμωρίαν δὲ σωτῆρα. *De Incarn.* p. 75.

5 Ὅτι τὸ ὅ πάντων θάνατος ἐν τῷ κυριακῷ σώματι ἐπληρώθη. θάνατος δὲ τῷ χρόνῳ, καὶ θάνατον ὡς πάντων ἔδει γινέσθαι, ἵνα τὸ πᾶσι πάντων ἐφειλόμενον γίνεσθαι *ibid.* p. 73.

6 *De Passione Domini* p. 1002.

no less than the sins of mankind, and the obligation to punishment which they had thereby contracted: But all that was but a small matter in comparison of what he gave in exchange, which was his own death and sufferings.

And with him agrees ¹ St. *Austin*, who in a devout contemplation of the greatness of his Savior's sufferings for him, cries out, *Magna est iniquitas mea, sed major est redemptio tua*: the punishment which my sins deserved is great, but what thou didst and sufferedst for my redemption is much greater. And so may every sinner truly say; which will not be a complement to his Savior; but a pious confession of his own demerit, and a grateful acknowledgment of the worth and dignity of his Redeemers passion. And of the same opinion with them both was ² St. *Cyril of Alexandria*, who affirms that the death of *one*, viz. of the *divine word*, who assumed our nature that in it he might dye for us; *omnium hominum vitæ preponderavit*, did not only equal but far excel the lives of all mankind.

I shall instance but in one Father more, and that is St. *Chrysostome*, who in his Exposition on the 5th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans* v. 17. affirms, that Christ did not only discharge our debt, but *πλεον ὧν ὀφείλομεν κατέβαλεν*, paid more than we owed: nay, *πλεον, ὥσῳ πρὸς παντὶ μικρὸν πέναντος ἄπειρον*, so much the more, as that our whole debt bore no greater a proportion to it, than a drop of water doth to the immense Ocean. Here is the doctrine, not only of *equivalents*, but even of *exsuperants* delivered with a witness. And I believe neither *Anselm* nor *Lombard*, nor *Thomas*, nor *Bonaventure*, nor any other the most subtil and Metaphysical Schoolman, could deliver himself more fully, or as some perhaps may think, hyperbolically upon this occasion.

By all which it plainly appears what the opinion of the *Ancients* was, concerning the end and design of Christ's dying for us, which was that he might thereby satisfy the justice of his Father for our sins. And whatever other ways the infinite

¹ *Serm. de Temp.* 122. ² *Exegetis ad Valerianum de verbis Incarn. citat. à Grot. Lib. de Satisf. inter Testim. Vet.*

wisdom

wisdom of God might have found out for the redemption and salvation of mankind, yet the reason why he contrived and pitched upon this method in their opinion was, because it was the fittest way for the vindicating his authority, and giving satisfaction to his justice, I mean a full and plenary satisfaction.

And with these expressions of the Fathers, agree the declarations of our Church, frequently made by her in her Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies: particularly in the first Sermon concerning the Salvation of mankind; where we are told, *that God sent his only son our Saviour Christ into the world, to fulfill the Law for us, and by shedding his most precious blood, to make a sacrifice and satisfaction, or (as it may be called) amends to his Father for our sins, to assuage his wrath and indignation conceived against us for the same.* And in the Conclusion of that discourse. *That whereas all the world was not able of themselves to pay any part towards their Ransome: It pleased our Heavenly Father of his infinite mercy to prepare for us the most precious Jewels of Christs Body and Blood, whereby our ransome might be fully paid, the Law fulfilled, and his justice fully satisfied.* By all that hath been said upon this head, I think we have made it sufficiently to appear, that the end and reasons of Christs sufferings do clearly demonstrate, that they were equivalent to the punishment of all mankind.

This will be farther evident in the second place from the consideration of their inward worth and dignity, arising indeed from the superlative eminence and dignity of the person suffering; who was the eternal son of God, and God blessed for ever. 'Twas he who purchased and redeemed his Church with his own blood. Indeed the sufferings of our Savior if considered in themselves, abstracting from the divinity of his person, could not be of such extraordinary excellence and value as we now contend for. The pains that he endured in his body it is true were very acute and grievous. The fear and horror which he was under from the apprehensions of his Fathers wrath, and indignation against sin, (of which to be sure he had a clear, and sensible view when he stood in the

room of sinners;) and the *anguish and agonies* of his Soul which were consequent thereunto, tho exquisitely and unexpressibly great; so that he might cry out, *was ever any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger?* yet for all this they were but finite, because terminated in his humane nature which was so.

For this reason, as his sufferings before, and upon the Cross, were *extensively* and in their duration finite, it was impossible that *intensively* and with respect to any degrees of pain, they should be infinite; and consequently they could not be equal to the punishment of all mankind. But then we are farther to consider, that this humane nature, made up of that body, and soul in which he suffered, was united to the Divine word: and this gave them *pondus immensum* saith *Limb. nay valorem infinitum* say other Protestants, and so say the Ancients: whereby they did not only *procure*, but strictly and properly *merit pardon*. For which reason the Church teaches us to recommend our selves to the mercy of God, thro the *merits*, nay the *allsufficient merits* of his son. I hope here I need not be put upon the proof either first, that in all true merit there is *dati & accepti aequalitas*, a just proportion and equality between the thing given and received, the action and the reward; and consequently that if the sufferings of our Savior are *meritorious* of pardon, they must be equivalent *malo & miserie à qua redempti sumus*; to that guilt and misery from which we are redeemed. This is agreed on on all hands, as every body knows, who pretends to know any thing of these matters, and the disputes between us and the *Papists* upon this Subject.

Nor in the second place is it needful, I hope, to prove, that the sufferings of our Savior were *truly and properly* meritorious. This is owned by all good Christians, both Papists and Protestants being at perfect agreement in this matter. And the declarations of our own Church about it are so frequently made, and so fully expressed, that she hath left no room for doubt or scruple concerning her sense of it. Nay she doth not only believe this doctrine concerning the merits of Christ to
be

be true. but likewise so *important a truth*, that she hath declared, that to deny it is in effect to renounce the Christian Religion. And for any man to pretend to be a member of this Church, and yet to make any doubt of the truth of that, which she so often affirms, and which she requires all her devout Children in their solemn addresses to Heaven to make mention of, as the only ground of their confidence, and the true bottom upon which they can place their hopes of pardon and acceptance: I say after all this for any to pretend to be of *her Communion*, and yet either *deny*, or indeed *doubt of it*: is such a degree of prevarication. that we cannot easily find words to express the scandal and impiety of it. Now from both these things it must plainly follow, that the doctrine of *Christ's merits*, and the doctrine of *Equivalents*, must either both be received or both be rejected, and must stand or fall together.

But perhaps for all this it will be said, that *Calvin* and some other *Protestant Divines*, deny the *merits of Christ* strictly so called, and say his sufferings are only meritorious by divine acceptance. To which I answer, that tho the Divine acceptance (as we have allways affirmed) is absolutely necessary to render them effectually such to us; yet their merit is originally founded in their internal worth and dignity, and that *equality* and *proportion* which is to be found between them and the reward, to which they are ordained and appointed. And this their immense value and dignity is acknowledged by *Calvin* and all other *Protestants* in as ample manner as can be desired. But for the Readers farther satisfaction, and that he may not be led into any mistakes by the suggestions either of *Papists* or *Rem.* in this matter; He must know that there was a controversy which did arise

1 This faith the holy Scripture teacheth us. (*viz.* concerning the merits of Christs precious blood as the true cause of our justification) this is the strong rock and foundation of the Christian Religion: this doctrine all old and ancient Authors of Christs Church do approve: this doctrine advanceth and setteth forth the true glory of Christ, and beateth down the vain glory of man: this whosoever denyeth is not to be accounted for a Christian man &c. *The third part of the Homily of Salvation.*

betwixt the *reformed* and some of the *Schoolmen*, occasioned by a very nice and overcurious question started by these latter; who according to their custom, after they have rightly stated, and by clear arguments confirmed the truth; do then proceed to propose several vain and curious questions about it; which they as vainly and confidently venture to determine, without any good warrant from reason, and less from divine authority and revelation, which is generally silent in those matters. This being generally the great fault of those writers, whose writings otherwise are of excellent use. And so it hath happened in the case before us. For having rightly and in agreement with the *Ancient Church* asserted and vindicated the dignity and efficacy of our Saviors sufferings: they then proceed farther, and propose this nice and impertinent question, whether, if the Son of God, without the consent, and antecedent to any agreement between him and his Father, had taken our nature upon him, and in it had suffered for the sins of men; whether I say in this case, his death and sufferings would have procured and merited pardon for sinners; and which God the Father must in point of strict justice have accepted, tho' he had entered into no such covenant and agreement with his Son.

Here the reformed divines, and particularly *Calvin*, (who is railed at by *Vasquez*, and mentioned by *Limb.* with commendation for so doing) upon good reason dissents from these Schoolmen; and rightly states this matter, as we formerly observed: viz. that the sufferings of Christ, tho' of infinite va-

1 Vide *Vasq. disput. 5. in tertiam partem Divi Thomae.* 2 *Loto jam cit.* 3 *Th. Christ. lib. 3. cap. 21.* 4 And with them agrees *Suarez* (for the Schoolmen themselves are divided upon this subject) who very clearly and judiciously hath stated this matter in the following words. *De ratione meriti perfecti est, ut opus ipsum habeat sufficientem proportionem, & condignum valorem respectu illius præmii ad quod ordinatur: quia alias non servaretur aequalitas quam iustitia postulat. Præter hanc autem operis proportionem & dignitatem, existimo necessariam esse promissionem sub conditione operis, in qua tale opus nitatur. Est enim meritum (ut omnes Theologi fateantur) actus cui debetur ex iustitia merces; unde non satis est ut de se sit condignus & proportionatus præmio, sed etiam oportet ut habeat vim inducendi obligationem ex iustitia, ex qua illi debeatur præmium. Nullus enim actus meritorius apud Deum potest respectu illius habere hanc vim, nisi in illius promissione vel pacto fundatur: quia cum Deus sit absolutus & supremus Dominus, nullus alius potest per se obligare illum*

lue, could not have obliged God the Father to grant remission of sin, without his own free consent. Because he might (if he had, so thought fit) have refused any *Exchange* tho of never so great value; and have demanded the punishment of the *criminals themselves*. But upon supposition of such agreement, none can speak in more lofty and sublime termes of the dignity and virtue of their Saviors, sufferings than the *reformed* generally do: who acknowledge them to be of infinite worth and value, and *strictly meritorious* of pardon. And particularly *Chamier* in his disputation on this subject, tells *Vasquez* (who had raised some groundless and unreasonable complaints against *Calvin* upon this occasion) that he did but lose his time, and abuse the patience of his Readers by such loud but fruitless exclamations. *you magnify the merits, saith he, of Christ, and tell us that the price which he laid down for our redemption, equalled, nay exceeded our guilt; but you are so far from meeting with any opposition from us upon this account, that we own and contend for it as well as you. It is the subject of our sermons and catechetical discourses: our children are taught and instructed to acknowledge it; and it is reputed by us among the first principles of the Oracles of God.*

Which Testimony of his ought the more to be regarded, because he speaks not only his own sense, but likewise in the name of the *Gallican* and other *Churches*; whose judgment and authority ought to be of the greater value and weight with us, than the *Heterodox* and new fangled Opinions of *Episcopius* and his disciples: who in this, as well as some other matters, have forsaken the common faith of the *reformed Churches*, & *in castra Socini transivere*, giving too great countenance to the bold and pernicious tenets of *Socinus*.

illum ex iustitia, seclusa promissione ejus. Comment. in tertiam partem Thom. Tom. 1. quest. 19. Art. 3. Sect. 1. Vide illum fuse ac nervose disputantem de hac re, quest. 1. Art. 2. Disp. 4. cod. lib.

1 *Abutimini, oh Sophista, otio vestro, nostra patientia, cum hac nunc ingeritis tam importune. Probatu scil. immensam esse dignitatem pretii pro nobis oblato: probatis aequasse peccatum, probatis longe superasse peccatum. Egregiam vero laudem! quasi ea non sit vel puerorum apud nos institutio,* Cham. de merito Christi, cap. 3.

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This is a truth therefore that we must stand by, and which ought stiffly to be maintained by us, in opposition to any innovations that may be attempted in this matter, either as to words or sense. It is true the words *merit*, and *satisfaction* are not to be found in Scripture, for which reason they are quarrel'd at and rejected by 'Curcellæus and 'Limb. But this matters not, as long as the sense and meaning couched under them is to be found there. And this is acknowledged by 'Socinus himself in another case. The words are now adopted by the Church, inserted into her *Homilies* and *Liturgies*; they are part of the *Catholic Faith* and become the common Language of all Christians. So that we cannot lay them aside, without giving infinite offence and scandal to all our friends of the Reformation, and at the same time of affording matter of boasting and triumph to our adversaries of the Church of *Rome*, who have long since told the world, that we are grown weary of our old Religion, and are all ready to turn *Socinians*. Besides all this, it will justify in great measure the Calumnies of our Modern *Unitarians*, who will exceedingly triumph to find their suspicions made good, viz. that we secretly favor their impious Opinions: and that if it were not for the *Bias* that is given to our minds by the awe of our superiors, and the love of our preferments, we would soon take off the mask and discover our true sentiments in their favor.

Lastly; as the worth and dignity of our Saviors sufferings prove them to be equivalent to the punishment of all mankind; so the effect and consequence of them are a clear demonstration of it likewise. For he underwent what the Law threatened, and our guilt rendered us obnoxious to: and we are thereby for ever freed from the obligation to punishment. I mean *ex parte Dei*, whose anger is pacified, and his justice is fully sa-

1 Dissert. de vocibus Trinitatis, Personæ, &c. Sect. 30. 31. Christ. Lib. 3. Cap. 21.

2 Theolog.

3 Rejiciuntur à nostris hominibus nomina Trinitatis & personarum in Deo, non ob id præcipue, quod ipsa nomina in sacris literis non legantur; sed quod res ipsæ quas significant ibidem nullo modo contineantur, Socin. Defens. animadver. adversus Eutrop. Oper. Tom. 2. p. 635.

tified; so that he requires no new sacrifice, exacts no new sufferings from us to entitle us to pardon: because our Savior by that one oblation of himself made upon the Cross, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and having thereby perfected for ever them that are sanctified; all that he now expects from us, are as we said before, *repentance from dead works, and faith in his son*, without which the redemption purchased will not be available to us; because without those conditions, as God in honor and justice cannot bestow, so neither are we capable of receiving those benefits, which Christ by dying in our stead hath merited for us.

But otherwise, all that was necessary to appease the anger of God, and to purchase pardon for sinners, hath been abundantly performed by our Savior; who having undergone the sentence, and submitted to the punishment of the Law, in our room and stead, hath discharged us from the obligation to it. For hereby as the Apostle tells us, *He hath blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, and which was contrary to us*, Col. 2. v. 14.

By Ordinances there are meant, both the Ceremonial and the Moral Law, from the obligation to which we (both Jews and Gentiles) are delivered by the Cross, that is the death of Christ; but not in the same way and manner. By his death we are entirely freed from any obligation to the observance of the Ceremonial, and from the curse and condemnation of the Moral Law; which therefore might be said to be against us, because it being not fulfilled and obeyed by any in that latitude and perfection which was required, it subjected all mankind to the Curse annexed to the violation of it. The Law then was a *Chirographum*, a written testimony, sufficient to convince us before God, and render us obnoxious to his justice, as a bond doth a debtor. But the force of this even the Moral Law, as to its condemning part, was evacuated and disannulled by the death of Christ.

And this is fully and emphatically expressed by the Apostle by three phrases, which denote the total abolition and extinction of the power and obligation of this hand-writing, or
written

written Law, I mean as to what concerns the punishment threatned by it. 1st. *It was blotted out and cancelled as men do a Bond when it is discharged.* 2^{dly}, *He took it out of the way, so that it should never after be produced, or be forth coming to accuse or convince us* Lastly, *He nailed it to his Cross, rending it as it were with the nails of his Cross, and thereby tearing it to pieces, as men do a bond after it is cancelled,* which is then done, *cum omne quod debebatur solutum est*; our Savior hereby discovering and declaring to the world, that he had undertaken, and suffered the penalty and condemnation due to the forfeiters of that Bond.

Neither can all this be resolved into divine acceptation and pleasure; because the intention and design of the Apostle was to set forth and declare to the world both Jews and Gentiles, not only the *riches of Gods grace* in the forgiveness of sin, but likewise the *mighty power and efficacy* of Christs death, whereby it was procured and purchased. Which appears by what follows, when in the next verse he tells us, that by thus annulling the condemning force of the Law, he *spoiled the powers of darkness, and those principalities* of evil Spirits, who hereby were devided of that power and jurisdiction whereby they ruled over us as their Slaves and Captives; nay he *made a shew of them*, leading them as it were in triumph as the Conquerors of old were wont to do, and made them attend the wheels of his Chariot, *viz.* his Cross, in which he rested himself and sate as it were in state, after he had thereby vanquished all his and the enemies of our salvation.

Now if the death of Christ had no other dignity and efficacy but what was owing purely to divine estimation and acceptance; Then I say it could not bear such a loftiness and sublimity of expression, with which it is set forth by the Apostles: neither could our Savior with any regard to fitness and decency, be represented, as he here is, sitting as it were in state, adorned with the glorious and magnificent titles of *conquest and triumph*, encompassed with the spoils of his adver-

1 See the *Oxford Paraphrase* upon this Text.

as so many trophies of his victories over them: Because according to this opinion, if we consider things impartially, we shall find that what he did was very little and inconsiderable to this purpose.

He *died* for us indeed, but his death if considered in it self, was but a very feeble impotent business: it had no *power* to effect, no *worth and dignity* to procure and merit our redemption. The Devil, it is true, the great enemy of our salvation, is now vanquished, and he who *bruised the heel* of our Savior is now placed under his and *our feet*; but this is owing not to the *passion of Christ*, but to the *power of God*, and our deliverance from his tyranny is to be ascribed solely to divine grace and favor. And if it had not been for *that*, we must still have continued under the guilt of our sins and the dominion of the Devil, notwithstanding any efficacy that we may imagine was in the death of Christ; whose *cross* would only have been a monument of the injustice and cruelty of the *Jews and Romans*, but no *trophie* of his power and conquest over sin and Hell; as the Christian world hath hitherto vainly fancied. But I shall forbear enlarging any farther on this subject.

By what hath been said, I think it plainly appears that the *death* of our Savior, whereby as a *priest* he offered up himself a sacrifice to divine justice, was *equivalent* to the death and punishment of all mankind: and therefore (that we may bring both parts of our argument together) that it was a clear proof of his *Divinity*. And for such it was allways acknowledged and urged by the *Fathers* when they discoursed of this matter. For when the question at any time was put, how the sufferings of Christ could suffice to purchase pardon and mercy for the whole world, they allways resolved the efficacy of them into the *divine nature* which was united to the *humane* in which he suffered. He *only did*, and he *only could* redeem us.

Now this must not be so understood, as if any restraints

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Eos itaque qui dicunt, Itane desuit Deo alius modus, quo liberaret hominem a miseria mortalitatis huius ut unigenitum filium hominem fieri vellet, mortalemque factum mortem perpeti? parum est sic refellere, ut istum modum asseramus bonum & divine congruum dignitati, verum etiam ut ostendamus, non alium modum possibilem

were designed thereby to be laid on the *power of God*, or such limits assigned to *his wisdom*, as if he could not have found out any other way, or effected our salvation by any other means than this: But when they spake of the reasons of our Saviors Incarnation and sufferings, they place the necessity of them in the divine *appointment and decree*. That is, since God had so ordered this matter, that the redemption of mankind was to be accomplished by a *plenary satisfaction* made to his justice; it was therefore necessary that a *divine person* should suffer, otherwise those sufferings could not have been of sufficient value, nor have afforded that perfect satisfaction which the Law required, and divine justice demanded.

‘How could Christ who was but a part of the world, save the whole world? it was the objection of the *Apollinarians* mentioned by *Athanasius*: which the holy Father styles a *deceitful and blasphemous suggestion*, because he who wrought our Salvation for us *was God as well as man*. If he had been only a man, it would have been a very proper question, and would have carryed a difficulty with it, such as could not have been solved. But when we consider that he was the *Son of God* who dyed for us, the objection immediately vanishes. *ἐκ αὐτοῦ γὰρ, ὡς αὐτὸν ὁ αὐτὸς Θεὸς ὡς ἡμεῖς ἀκούσαμεν* before; ‘it was not in the power of any other either man or Angel, to purchase this redemption for us; he who first made, he only could restore us.

bilem Deo defuisse, cuius potestas nulla equaliter subiacent; sed sanctorum nostrae miseriae convenientiorem modum alium non fuisse, non esse operuisse. Aug. Lib. 13. de Trinit. Cap. 10. *Verax namque misericordia Dei; cum ad reparandum humanum genus ineffabiliter ei multa suppeterent, hanc potissimum consulendi viam elegit, qua ad destruendum opus diaboli, non virtute uteretur potentia, sed ratione iustitie.* Leo Mag. Serm. de Nativ. Christi.

I. Ἀλλὰ πάλιν λέγουσι, εἰ ἀνθρώπος ὁ Χριστός, πῶς ἔστιν ὁ κόσμος, μὴτος ὁ κόσμος κόσμον ἐποίησε ἢ διδάσκει, ὡς διδάσκει ἀνθρώπος, καὶ διδάσκει βλασφημίας. ἐν ἡρώτοι ἐπερχόμεν ἡ ἀμαρτία, ἐν αὐτῇ γίνονται ἡ μελαινάτα ὁ χλευασμός. τίς ὁ μελαινάτα ὁ χλευασμός, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ἀνθρώπος γίνονται, μόνον Θεός, ἴνα καὶ ἀνθρώπων γάρβωτος, Θεὸς μεταδῇ. Athan. de salutari Christi adventu, p. 639. Edit. Colon.

2 Loc. prius cit. p. 103.

'It was not a meer man, but the God man Christ Jesus, saith St. Basil' who could be a propitiation for the sins of the world. For what is there of that value, that was possible for a man to give for the redemption of his own Soul; but the infinite wisdom of God contrived and found out a price of equal value to the sins of mankind, viz. the holy and precious blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Proclus Bishop of Cyzicum and afterwards of Constantinople, in the Homily which he spoke in the great Church at Constantinople in the presence of Nestorius then Patriarch there; declares himself very clearly and fully upon this subject. For in giving an account of the end and reasons of Christ's Incarnation, he tells us, ² that mankind were much indebted to the justice of God by reason of their sins, which debts they themselves were not able to discharge: The Devil in the meantime was not wanting upon all occasions to put them in mind of their demerit, and to demand their punishment. Now one of these two things was absolutely necessary, either that all must undergo the death to which they were condemned, because all had sinned; or else that some such price for their redemption should be laid down as might fully satisfy the demands of justice. But this neither Man nor Angel could do :

1 Μὴτι ὃν ἄνθρωπον ἡλὸν ζήτει εἰς ἀπολύτωσην, ἀλλ' ἄνθρωπον θῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, ὃς καὶ μόνος δύναται ἐξῆλασθαι τὸ θάνατον ὑπὲρ πάντων ἡμῶν, & postea : τί γὰρ δυνάμει ἄνθρωπος εὐρεῖν περικύβητον, ἵνα δώῃ ὑπὲρ λυτρώσεως τῆ ψυχῆς ἡμῶν; ἀλλ' εὐρίσκει ἐν ὅλῳ πάντων ἄνθρωπων ἀνταξίον, ὃ ἔδωκεν εἰς τιμὴν λυτρώσεως ψυχῆς ἡμῶν, τὸ ἅγιον καὶ πολύτιμον ἄγμα τῆ Κυρίας ἡμῶν Ἰουδίας Χριστοῦ, ὃ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐξέχει πάντων, Basil. Homil. in ps. 48. v. 7.

2 Μὴτι καὶ αἰτίας τῆς παρυσίας καὶ διέσεως τῆ δυνάμεως τοῦ σωτήρος. πολλὰ ἔρεται ἐξ ἡμαρτιῶν καὶ τῶν ἄνθρωπων φύσις, καὶ ἡτοῦτο σέως τὸ χρίσμα. ἂν γὰρ τῆ Ἀδὰμ πάντες τῆ ἡμαρτίας ἐχρησάμεθα δόλως ἡμᾶς κατεχέτω ὁ Διόβολος. τὰς αἰτίας ἡμῶν σέωσιν, ἡτοῦτο καὶ χρίσμα τὸ πολυτιμὸν ἡμῶν σώματι. εἰσέκει ὁ κενὸς τῶν παθῶν πλοσώμενος, ὁπίσκει ἡμῶν τὸ χρίσμα, καὶ ἀπαιτῶν ἡμᾶς τῆ δόλου, ἵδι τῶν αἰνῶν δούειν δάττειν, ἡ πᾶσι ἐπαχθῆναι καὶ ἐκ τῆ κατὰ φύσιν δόλου, ἐπειδὴ καὶ πάντες ἡμαρτον, ἡ τοῦτο δόλου σέως ἀντίδοτον τιμῆς, ὃ πᾶν ὑπὲρ τῆ δόλου σέως παρὰ τὴν. ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ὃν σώσει ἢ ἰδούκατο. ὑπὸ τῶν γὰρ τῶν χρίσιν καὶ ἡμαρτίας. ἀγγέλος ἐξουσιάζων καὶ ἄνθρωπον τῶν ἐκ τῶν ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ γὰρ τῶν αἰνῶν. λοιπὸν ὃν ὁ ἀναμέτρητος δόλος ὑπὲρ τῶν ἡμαρτιῶν δόλου αἰνῶν. αὐτὴ γὰρ ἐλπίς τῶν μόνων τῶν κατὰ τὴν φύσιν. Concil. Eph. Edit. Labb. cap. 1. p. 14.

'it remained therefore that he who was God should dye in
'the room of sinners; this being the only way left whereby
'they could escape that misery to which otherwise they must
'unavoidably be exposed. *Again,* 'He only was able to re-
'deem us; because being God as well as man, he did lay down
'a price which was not only *equal* or *equiponderant* to our Guilt,
'but which did by many degrees exceed it.

A very proper question is put by ² *Theodorus* Bishop of *An-
cyræ* in the *Homily* which he spoke upon the day of our *Saviors*
Nativity, and which was publickly read in the Council of
Ephesus; 'If it were not God who suffered for the sins of men,
'from whence could those sufferings acquire that mighty force
'and efficacy which is ascribed to them? How could death be
'destroyed by death, except it were God that dyed for us? But
'forasmuch as those sufferings were undergone by him that was
'God as well as man, it is no wonder that such mighty things
'should be accomplished by them; since they received their
'virtue and power from his Divinity.

The like question is put by ³ *St. Cyril* of *Alexandria* more than
once. 'If our Savior was but a common man, how could his
'life be equal to the lives of all men which were forfeited to

1 Τούτος γὰρ ὁ λόγος κατ' οἰκονομίαν ὕπερ γέγονεν, ὕπερ ὧν, ὕπερ ἑσσι ποτὶ, ἢ μόνον ὁ ἐκ
παρθενης γεννηθείς Θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος· ἐκ ἀντιπαλαστήσεως μόνον ἔχον τὴν ἀξίαν τῶν πλάνης τῶν
ἑσθίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσης ψυχῆς ὑπερῆχουσι. *ibid.* p. 15.

2 Εἰ γὰρ ἐκ φικειώσεως τὰ πάθη Θεός, πόθεν τοῖς πάθεσι τὸ Χριστὸς τὰ πάντα καταρ-
μάτα; πῶς ἐξήντο διωκόμεν; πῶς ἀνακρίεται θάνατον ὁ θάνατος, εἰ μὴ Θεὸς αὐτὸν ἴδον
ἐκτίσαστο; ἀλλὰ ταῦτα τὰ πάθη οἰκονομήματα Θεοῦ, καὶ μὴ ἰσχυρὰ τῶν πονηρῶν καταρμάτων ἐκ
δύστητος ἔλαβεν, ὅτι Θεὸς ἴδια μεταβολή, ὅσον δὲ δύστητος ἢ παρὶς ἐλάσεν, ἐν τῇ ταύτης ἀεί-
ματι καὶ ἀπαθείᾳ. πῶς γὰρ φερεσθῆναι τῷ ἔθνει τὸ κατ' ἑμὲν τὸ ἀμαρτίας χυμώματον, ἀνδρῶ-
ν ψυχὰς καὶ σώματα ὑπομένειν; πῶς ὁ σωτὴρ ἀμαρτίας ἐσθίων, ἢ θάνατος θάνατον
καὶ παρατίθη δόλουν, εἰ μὴ ταῦτα γέγονε Θεός, καὶ πῶς ἐκείνη καὶ διώκων ἔλαβεν, οἰκονο-
μήσει τὰ ἡμέτερα; *ibid.* part. 3. cap. 9. p. 993.

3 Πῶς δὲ καὶ εἰς ὅσον πάντων ἀπέναντι, ὁ πάντων ἀντάξιός, εἰ ἀπὸ τοῦ πῶς ἀνδρῶν
ροῦνται τὰ πάθη; εἰ δὲ πέποιεν ἀνδρῶν, ὡς τὰ τῶν ταύτης σαρκὸς οἰκονομῶν πάθη
τότε διὰ τότε σαμὲν, καὶ μέλα ἐκείνως, ὡς τῶν ἀπάντων ζωῆς ἀντάξιός, ὁ ἑνὸς τοῦ κα-
τὰ σάρκα θάνατος. ἔχ' ὡς ἑνὸς ὅτε κατ' ἑμῶν, εἰ δὲ γέγονε κατ' ἑμῶν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ Θεὸς
ὡς φησὶ, σπλάγχνα τῆς καὶ ἐλπίσεως καὶ τῶν πνεύματι ἐμολογίαν. De Verbi In-
carnat. Exegefti ad Valerian. *ibid.* part. 3. cap. 40. 1161.

'divine

'divine justice? To which he gives the very same answer: He 'was God incarnate who dyed, and then it is no wonder that 'he could lay down such a price as was sufficient for the redemption of the whole world. This he repeats again and again, and both he and the other *Fathers* assembled in the great *Council of Ephesus* still resolve the dignity and efficacy of our Saviors sufferings into the *Divinity of his person*. And with this Argument they combat the Heresy of *Nestorius*, the impiety and danger of whose opinion chiefly consisted in this, viz. that by dividing Christ into *two persons*, and consequently cutting off all *communication of properties* between them; he plainly evacuated the force and energy of our Saviors sufferings, and thereby clearly subverted the doctrine concerning the redemption of the world by his death, as it was stated in the *Scriptures*, and believed by the *Catholic Church*.

If *Nestorius* had lived in our days, he might have answered for himself, as some now do: It is true by asserting *two persons* as well as *two natures* in Christ, I must acknowledge that he was a meer man that dyed for us, and consequently that the sufferings of an *Humane person*, could receive no virtue or dignity from the *Divine person* to which he was united, and which did cohabit and dwell in him. Neither is there any need that this should be done; for their efficacy doth not arise either from the *worthyness of the person*, or the *dignity of those sufferings*: They may without this, be still allsufficient, because their sufficiency

Ι Εἰ μὲν ἀνθρώπος τοίσδε κοινὸς, πῶς ἀντιτίθεται τῷ ἀπέναντον ζῶντι τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ; εἰ δὲ Θεὸς ὡς ἐν σαρκὶ ὁ πάντων ἀξιώτερος, ἀξιοχρεῖται ἢ λόγους ἢ λόγον πάντες ἀλλήλοις αἵματος ἢ ἂν δὲ μέλα εἰκότως. Id. *ibid.* part. 1. cap. 4. p. 186. ὅτι τίς τινος καὶ τίς ἐν ῥήμῳ λέλυκεν ἀλλὰ ὁ Χριστὸς θάνατος, ἐκ ἀνθρώπου κοινὸν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις θάνατος οὐκ ἔστιν. ἀλλὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ μάλιστα, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ λόγος, σαρκὶ τίποιθεν ἰσχύς ἢ λόγος, καὶ γέγονεν ἱκανὸν τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶσι εἰς τὴν τῷ λόγῳ λύτρωσιν. Id. *ibid.* pag. 187. & alibi passim.

2 In this cohabitation or indwelling consisted the great mystery of the *Hypostatic union*, as it was explained by *Nestorius*; which explication of his was censured and condemned in the before mentioned Council of *Ephesus*. Vide *Cyrill. Exeg. ad Valerian. Concil. Eph. Par. 3. Cap. 40. p. 1160. Et Nestorii Anathematismus Cyrilli Anath. oppositorum par. 1. Cap. 29 p. 424.*

depends

depends only on the divine pleasure and acceptation. But those Fathers were strangers to this sort of *Divinity*; who allways believed that no less a recompense would be accepted of by God, than that which *was equal* to the guilt and demerit of mankind, and that none therefore could make it but he who was God as well as man.

I should tire the Reader if I should cite all the Testimonies of the other Fathers, which might be produced to this purpose. And indeed I have been the longer upon this subject, in citing and insisting on the former authorities from the *Ancients*, that I might rescue this doctrine concerning our Saviors satisfaction from the reflections cast upon it, as if it were only a *Metaphysical nicety*, and the *invention of the Schoolmen*: which now by some is thought to be so great a disparagement to any opinion, that you need not add any thing farther to expose it to contempt, and indeed to the detestation of the readers. But by what hath been produced I hope it sufficiently appears that this was the doctrine of the *Church of Christ*, allways professed and maintained by the Fathers long before any such persons as the *Schoolmen* were ever heard of in the world. And what they say upon this subject may be reduced to these four Heads.

1st, That whatever methods the divine wisdom might have contrived for the Salvation of Mankind, yet the way that he pitched upon was, by demanding a *plenary, adequate satisfaction* for those wrongs and injuries that were done to his authority by the violation of his Laws. 2^{dly}, That it was not in the power of Man or Angel, or any other creature, to afford any such *compensation* to divine justice. Because, *ex perfecta justitia*, the expiation of Sin could not be accomplished but by such sufferings as were of *infinite value*. 3^{dly}, That our Savior by dying for us did make a *sufficient recompence* to that justice. The honor and authority of God being fully and in a more eminent manner vindicated *by his death*, than injured by *our disobedience*. So that his punishment did not only *equal*, but indeed *preponderate* our guilt. *Lastly*, That this was a clear proof of his *Divinity*. *The Church of God was redeemed by his blood*; the price therefore which he paid was of *unspeakable value*: the sacrifice which

which he offered was of *immense*; nay *infinite* *virtue*; the *punishment* which he underwent was *equivalent* to the sufferings of all mankind. This shews him to be God, because none less than God could lay down *such a price*, offer *such a sacrifice*, undergo *such sufferings* as were of this immense worth, this infinite force and efficacy.

And thus at length I have finished what I had to say upon this Head: and I hope have hereby made it sufficiently to appear that *Faith* as it is terminated upon *the person* of Christ is a necessary indispensable duty; and that the contrary opinion of *Socinus*, and *Episcop.* (which by confounding faith and obedience, makes the *former*, as it bespeaks the *persuasion* of the mind concerning the truths of the Gospel, and particularly that great truth, that Christ is the natural and eternal son of God, an useless and indifferent matter) is *highly dishonorable* to our Savior. And this was the first mischievous consequence which we affirmed, necessarily attends this opinion; because, without this persuasion concerning the *nature* of Christ, we cannot have that *inward* esteem and reverence for him as becomes us; we cannot make him those *outward acknowledgments*, nor pay him those external actions of Homage and worship which the Scriptures require of us. Nor lastly, can we truly and rightly own him to be *the Messiah*; because he could not execute the offices, nor perform the functions which belonged to him as *the Messiah*, except he were *God*, as well as man. And if so, then this persuasion of the mind concerning the Divine nature or Godhead of our Savior, is, *fatentibus adversariis*, absolutely necessary to Salvation, and that without which we cannot be Christians. The Primitive Christians could not conceive how it was possible for any person to be our Savior, who was not likewise our God. Therefore if it be necessary to believe Christ to be our Savior, it must at the same time (according to them) be necessary to believe him to be God.

And so I come to consider the second pernicious consequence which flows from it, *viz.* that it is highly pernicious to the *Christian Religion*, and the *Christian Church* which is established upon it, and

and tends plainly to undermine and overturn them both. And this I shall endeavor to make out, with relation first to the Doctrine, and then secondly to the practice of Christianity.

1st Then, as to what concerns the doctrine, I say that *Socinus* and his followers, by confounding *faith and obedience*, and accounting the former, as it bespeaks *the persuasion of the mind* concerning the truths of the Gospel, an useless or at best an indifferent matter; plainly lay the foundations of infidelity; and thereby betray the Christian Religion, and deliver up the Doctrines of it into the hands of its enemies, both those *within*, and those *without* the pale of the Church.

1st As to the former, such I mean, who take upon them the name and profession of Christians, (and therefore in a large general sense may be said to be within the Pale of the Church) and yet hold several pernicious and impious opinions, such as have been vended and published both in former and latter ages by divers bold and presumptuous persons, (such as were the *Cerinthians*, *Carpocratians*, *Valentinians*, *Marcionites* of old; *Unitarians*, *Anabaptists* (especially the *Munsterian* and *Flandrian* sorts) *Familists*, *Muggletonians*, *Quakers*, &c. of later times) to the great detriment and scandal of the Christian Religion, whereby the peace of the Church hath been disturbed, and the purity of its doctrines corrupted and depraved: 'Tis certain all these, together with the opinions published by them, (whether they are owing to *rapture and enthusiasm*, or are the product of a more *calm and deliberate contrivance*, in this case it matters not) receive too great countenance and encouragement from this notion. For since a good life is not only the principal end of all Religion, but consists *solely*, as they tell us, in the *Practice of Piety* and virtue; what need any man be concerned about his *Faith*, and the persuasion of his mind, concerning the *doctrines* of the Gospel, provided he yields obedience to the *precepts* of it; which obedience they say, is the summe and substance of Christianity.

Now it is certain, that *probity*, which is the main thing required and recommended by *Socinus*, consisting in the exercise

1 See the assertions of Socin. to this purpose before produced, p. 34, 35.

Justice, Charity, and Temperance, &c. and other moral virtues, may be, and hath been consistent with divers false and erroneous persuasions concerning the mysteries of Religion and the Articles of our Faith: and if so, from hence it must follow (I mean according to this notion advanced by *Socinus*) that it matters not what apprehensions you have of these *latter*; nor particularly what opinions you entertain of the *person and nature* of Christ: whether you conceive him to be *God or Man*; the son of *God*, or the son of *Joseph*: whether you think he existed from all eternity, or think he had no existence antecedent to his being born of the Virgin; whether you believe him to be *one person*, or divided *into two*: whether you think he consists of *two natures*, or after the union of both, whether they are so blended and confounded, as to make up *but one*: That is, whether you are an *Ebionite, Cerinthian, Arian, Samosatenian, Photinian, Nestorian, or Eutychian*; it is not much material: *modo vitæ sanctimonia salva sit*: provided you retain a due regard for holyness and live a good life.

For supposing the opinions before mentioned, or others of the like nature, to be opposite to the truth, yet forasmuch as they are not inconsistent with Piety, there can be no harm or danger in them. The persons who maintained them might be *men of probity*, and if so, the holyness of their Lives makes a sufficient atonement for the errors of their understanding, which at most are inconsiderable, and therefore very pardonable mistakes. For *among all Sects, and in all Ages*, as one of them saith, *God hath preserved a Body of Morality, which is the great and only design of the Gospel*. For which reason, not only the *Socinians*, (who publickly profess themselves to be of the

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1 *An Exhort. to an impartial enquiry into Rel. p. 15.*

2 We know the *Unitarians* both of this and the last Age, are so far from being ashamed of the above mentioned names, and others of the like nature, so as to look upon them to be termes of obloquy and reproach, that they rather Glory in them, and own divers of the Authors and Founders of those Sects to be of their Party. Nay upon this account they vye with the Orthodox for superiority in point of numbers, even in the Primitive times. So that of all those Heroes transmitted to us in the Catalogue of Hereticks, down from *Simon Magus* to *Arius*, there

the same party, and own the opinions of divers of them who in the first and purest ages, were branded with the name of *Hereticks*) but *Episcopus* and his followers acted by the same principle, speak very favorably in general both of *Heresy* and

there are few which they do not claim to be theirs. For whereas we cannot produce above twenty Authors, they say, in defence of our Doctrines concerning the Divinity of Christ; they can Cite near two hundred, who are clearly on their side, viz. *Theodotus, Symmachus, Cerintus, &c.* and much good may their numbers do them. See the Book Entitled *the Judgment of the Fathers opposed to Dr. Bull's Defence*. Whereas there are now lost about 200. for about 20 Antenicene writers which are preserved, we are to impute this loss, to the Errors contained in their Books; that is more plainly, he saith, to their too manifest agreement with the *Arian* and *Minean*, now called the *Socinian Heresies*, p. 5. See the *Brief Hist. of the Unitarians*, p. 10.

I Tanti est Remonstrantibus manifesta veritas, ut susque habeant, sive Socini, sive Serveti, sive Arii, sive Pelagii sive alterius exosissimi hominis nomen prescribatur, aut genium ejus aut spiritum redolere dicatur. Manifesta veritas non depreciabitur inuicis nominibus, prudentes non terrentur vocibus Hæreticorum, Episcop. Resp. ad Specimen. Calumn. Oper. Tom. 2. p. 287. In these words there is craftily pretended a reservation for truth; but then at the same time there is an insinuation, as if the Opinions of *Socinus, Servetus, Arius, Pelagius*, in those points in which they differ from the common and generally received doctrines of the Catholick Church, are true, which I think is a scandalous suggestion. *Affirmare non dubitamus, fieri posse, ut error aliquis qui non tantum in Doctrinam Jesu Christi impingit, sed ita etiam impingit, ut etiam in natura sua, & in seipso consideratus cultui & obsequio Jesu Christi, honorique & majestati ejus omnino contrarius sit, cum fide vera, qua creditur Jesum esse Christum, consistat, ac proinde errans talis, vere filius Dei, membrum Jesu Christi, & frater noster sit atque habeatur, Id. Lect. Sacrae. 1. Cap. 5. primæ Epist. Joh. v. 1. Ideas crebro id accidere ut qui Hæretici judicantur, vitæ sint castigationis & disciplina exactioris, atque ita exemplo suo non modo nulli non noceant, sed aliis ad accuratius vivendum occasionem simul ac stimulum præbeant. Quæ res innocentiam eorum adeo illustrat, ut merito dubites, majusne malum ab eorum Hæresi metuendum sit, an ab exemplo vitæ bonum sperandum: profecto vitæ innocentia admirabiles vires habet, & qui per errorem vel cum errore in ea adeo proficit, ut aliis exemplo sit & pene miraculo, ejus errori nescio quid non à nobis condonari possit ac debeat. Perdidit aculeum suum error qui vitæ emendationis studium non potest extinguere Id. in Videl. Rhapf. p. 351. Hic times, hic terminus eorum est, (Scilicet Remonstr.) neminem pium à se excludere, nec profanum admittere, dissentientes omnes ferre & amplecti. Quos Deus Cælo ac glorioso suo throno dignatur, eos tunc illi non dignentur societate sua? Atque certa res est, omnes & solos pios ac fideles Dei cultores, omnes pacificos Christi filii sui imitatores, Deus cælo & domo sua dignari vult. Dissentientes ac errantes à se separare, aut se à illis segregare, nusquam sibi mandatum legunt. Nec referre putant Remonstr. in quocunque dogmate sit dissensio, modo dogma illud Deum & pietatem non lædat, & qui iussu proficitur pacem cum dissentientibus colere ex animo paratus sit. Id. Apol. pro Conf. Remonstr. p. 118. His consentanea passim in illius scriptis, centies fere, usque ad fastidium ne dicam nauseam Lectoris repetita, reperiri possunt.*

Hereticks,

Hereticks, and profess a high respect nay a kind of veneration for some of them, especially for those of this and the last Age, who are the bold and implacable enemies of the blessed Trinity. They disown their doctrines in some measure it's true, but yet maintain a friendship and correspondence with the Authors of them, and give them the right hand of fellowship.

They complement their persons, extol their piety, excuse, extenuate, make apologies for their mistakes, and proclaim to the world, that they know no harm nor malignity that is in them. Thus like *Judas* they betray their Saviour with a kiss, and at the same time that they pretend to salute and reverence his person, and embrace his doctrines, they do really deliver up both into the hands of his professed enemies.

I know it will be here said, in behalf of both these before-mentioned *Socinians* and *Remonstrants*, that they are so far from disowning the *usefulness*, that they preach up the *necessity of Faith*, and upon all occasions declare, that to believe *Jesus to be the Messiah*, is a duty of absolute and indispensable obligation, and without which we cannot be Christians. To which I answer, that this very belief, which is all that they require of us, may be, and hath been consistent with divers, and those very dangerous errors, which plainly subvert the foundations of Christianity. And particularly in the primitive Church, sundry persons there were, who tho they did not totally revolt from the profession of the Christian Religion, but openly professed and believed *Jesus to be the Messiah*, yet for all this fell into many wild and desperate opinions, for which they were then, and still have been justly reputed *Hereticks*.

Thus the *Corporations* and *Cerinthians*, against whom *St. Jude* and *St. Peter* are supposed to write their Epistles, are styled by them *ungodly men*, and their errors, *damnable heresies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. for by denying the divine nature of Christ, and accounting him to be only a man, tho at the same time they owned him to be the *Messiah*; they are said by those inspired writers, to deny the Lord that bought them, Jude 2. 4.

And the *Judaizing Christians*, against whom *St. Paul* wrote especially in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, come under the like

Censure and Condemnation. For tho they did in general believe in Christ, yet forasmuch as at the same time they did likewise believe that they were under a necessary obligation to observe the *Ceremonial Law*; they did thereby evacuate the force, and destroy the excellency of their former Faith; and reduced themselves into a condition as bad as that of Infidels. For by this perswasion, *they did fall from Grace*, Gal. 5. 4. And while they continued in it, the Apostle assures them that *Christ would be of no effect to them*, or which is the same in other words, *would profit them nothing*, v. 2. That is, they should receive no advantage by any thing that Christ either did or suffered for their sakes. For which reason the Apostle chides them severely; upbraids them with their Levity and inconstancy in the profession of the Faith, charges them with folly and stupidity, that they should so soon be removed from the grace of Christ, and the obedience of the truth, which was so plainly preached, and so fully and evidently set forth before their Eyes, that except they were blinded or bewitched they must be forced to acknowledge it.

I confess if we were to be governed by the opinions of *Socinus* and his friends, (formerly published, and which do of late too much prevail) we might justly wonder why the Apostle should be so positive and so severe, and draw up so heavy a charge against the *Judaizing Christians*, upon the account of their mistakes in this matter. Did they renounce the Christian Religion, and by a total revolt to *Judaisme* plainly deny him, whom formerly they owned to be the *Messiah*? No they did not. How then could they be said to introduce a new Gospel who professed and maintained the great, nay the only fundamental article of it? Why should it be said that *Christ would profit them nothing*, who revered his person, submitted to his authority, obeyed his precepts; and in short, according to the opinion of these men, acknowledged all that was necessary to be believed, and performed all that was necessary to be practised? For the observance of the *Ceremonial* was not inconsistent with obedience to the *Moral Law*. For both *Christ* himself and his *Apostles*, those great patterns of virtue and holyness, for some time.

time shewed themselves conformable to both. Wherein then did the malignity of this error of theirs consist, which should bring them under so great and heavy a Censure? Why it consisted in this, that tho they acknowledged *Jesus to be the Messiah*, or the Christ, (otherwise they could not have been esteemed Christians) yet they did not own him to be so in the full import and signification of that word. They would acknowledge him to be *their King*, and as such were ready to obey his Laws: but they would not accept of, and own him to be *their Savior*; I mean a complete and perfect Savior. They expected justification by the works of the Law but not by the Faith of Christ, or at least partly by the Law, and partly by Christ; and thereby they clearly evacuated the force and efficacy of Christs death, and overthrew the end and reason of it, which was to purchase pardon of sin, and eternal Salvation for us.

In short, they did hereby frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain, Gal. 2. 21. Now this was plainly to undermine the Gospel of Christ, and to introduce a new one in its room; and whoever attempts to do so, whether he be *Man or Angel*, deserves to be censured with an *Anathema*, Gal. 1. 7. From whence it must follow, that there are more Articles than that one concerning the *Messiah* which are necessary to be believed; and more errors consequently destructive of Salvation, besides that one of denying *Jesus to be the Christ*, if we believe St. Paul. But he perhaps may be thought to be a hot-headed fiery zealot, who out of a contentious humor, and a concern for I know not what opinions of his own, disturbed the peace of the world, and turned it upside down. Socinus was a person of more wisdom and temper; he hath brought down Religion out of the Clouds, and hath reduced it, as *Socrates* did of old, all from speculation to practice. There is but one thing necessary, and that is obedience.

But doth not the Scripture say we are to believe in Christ? Yes, but that is only another word for obedience, if we believe Socinus, as was formerly observed. I pray you let us examine this matter a little more particularly, lest hereby we may be

be led into some great and dangerous mistake before we are well aware.

If we look into the *Gospels* we shall find the holy Pen-men of them very careful in giving us an exact account of the birth of our Savior, the manner and circumstances of his *life, death, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven*. The matter of fact is delivered by the *Evangelists*; the grounds, ends, and reasons of this whole dispensation, are more fully declared and explained by the *Apostles* in their *Sermons*; and the *Epistles* which they wrote, directed indeed to some particular Persons or Churches, but designed for the lasting benefit of all Christians, in all succeeding ages of the world. Now these things are faithfully recorded, frequently inculcated, and insisted upon by them, as matters of great importance, in the knowledge of which we are nearly concerned; and therefore they take all this pains sufficiently to instruct us, that we might thereby be fully persuaded of the truth of them. These things are written, saith St. John, *That yee may believe that Jesus is the son of God, and that believing ye might have life thro his name*, Jo. 20. 31.

Is it not then from hence evident, that these things which concern the *birth, death, resurrection, &c.* of our Savior, are properly Articles of our Faith, and that they ought therefore to be *distinctly known* (I speak still of those who have capacities of knowing, together with sufficient means of information) and *firmly believed* by us; and consequently that our *ignorance*, and much more our *denial* of these truths is extremely dangerous? No saith *Sorinus*, your *ignorance* of these matters cannot be dangerous, because your *belief* of them is not necessary. How not necessary? doth not the Scripture in express terms, and under the highest penaltys require it? Yes it doth indeed, but 'then you must know by *Faith* in those places where it is required of us as a necessary duty, is not meant the *assent of the understanding* to the truths of the Gospel, but a *confident persuasion*

1 Arbitror ante ea quæ à me hæcenus dicta sunt, satis esse ad demonstrandum, cur cum de Christi fide verba sunt, fiduciam potissimum intelligam quæ in ipso Christo collocetur. Atque affirmem hanc fidem esse illam Christi fidem qua revera iustificemur,

'*persuasion* and assurance, that if you obey the precepts of Christ, you shall be pardoned and saved by him. Now this *Faith*, you must know, as it signifies *fiducia*, hath no retrospect, doth not look backward to what is past, but always forward to what is to come. So that that Faith which is required to our justification, is not contentant about the birth, death, and resurrection of our Savior; all these things are past and gone; but you must look forward, and view Christ now in Heaven, sitting on the right hand of his Father, endued with power to save us, if we obey his Laws.

It is true indeed Christ now in Heaven is the noble object of our Faith, and the great support of it: But is it not requisite likewise to believe that he *died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification*? No: for tho' our Salvation may in some measure be owing to Christ's death and resurrection, yet for all that, it is of no great consequence, to be persuaded of them, because our justification doth not depend on any such knowledge or persuasion. For since to believe in Christ is to confide in him, *quis non videt*, saith Socin. who is so blind as not to see, that this Faith doth not consist in a firm persuasion, *beneficii jam accepti, sed aliquando accipiendi; of any thing that Christ hath done, or of any benefits which by dying and suffering he hath procured for us; but of what hereafter we shall receive from him, viz.* Remission of our sins, if we be obedient to his Laws.

comur, non autem persuasionem illam quod Jesus sit Messias, Socin. Libello de fide &c operibus, Tom. 2. Op. p. 205. Ex scripto igitur tuo (Covetum alloquitur) aperte colligitur, fidem illam in Christum qua nos justificari sacrae literae passim docent, nihil aliud esse quam firmiter credere, per ea quae passus est Christus peccata nostra deleta fuisse. Sed enunciationem istam à veritate quam longissime abesse, vel id satis ostendit, quod fides in Christum Dei promissione nititur. Verum promissio futurum tempus respicit. Itaque necesse est, fidem in Christum persuasionem seu firmam opinionem alienius rei, quae futura sit, contineri. At vestra istae in Christum fides praeteritum tempus omnino respicit, & firma opinione ejus rei quae jam perpetrata sit, tota continetur, Id. de Christo Serv. par. 4. Cap. 9. Cum de fide qua nos Deo gratos efficiat, sermo est, qualis certe fides in Christum censeri debet, vix invenias de re credenda agi quae jam perpetrata est; sed semper de futura, Id. ibid. p. 230.

1 Jam vero si fides in Christum est ipsi confidere, quis non videt, fidem in Christum non praeteritum tempus sed futurum respicere; & non firma opinione beneficii jam accepti, sed aliquando accipiendi contineri? Id. ibid. p. 231.

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Now this we must needs say is a very mischievous position, advanced in direct opposition to the whole tenor of the Gospel, and to the express declarations of what Christ and his Apostles have so often made upon this occasion. For doth not the Angel who appeared to *Joseph* in a dream, give him this as the reason why the Child which was conceived by the *Virgin Mary* his wife, should be called *Jesus*, viz. *because he should save his people from their Sins*? Math. 1. 21. and doth not that same *Jesus* acquaint his Disciples with the way and manner how that Salvation was to be accomplished, viz. by the shedding of his blood? *This is my blood which is shed for the remission of Sins*, Mat. 26. 28. And doth not he in another place inform them that this was the principal end of his coming into the world, that he might give his life a Ransome for many, or for all? Mark 10. 45.

Is it not fit therefore that the ground and reason of our Saviors coming into the world, and the way whereby he purchased remission of sins for us, should be known and believed by us? No, saith *Socinus*, 'there is no necessity that this should be known, as in fact it was actually known but by very few. And therefore saith he, 'I do not remember that ever our Savior acquainted the multitude with this, or ever Preached any such doctrine in publick to them. It was a secret which he privately whispered to his Disciples when they were alone, and there it rested and went no farther. How? declared only to his Disciples? doth not our Savior in a publick discourse and in the hearing of

1 Tale quidpiam populo nunquam dixit. Tantum discipulis suis seorsim semel dixisse eum legimus, sanguinem suum jamjam fusum iri pro multis in remissionem peccatorum, Math. 26. 28. Idem etiam solis discipulis affirmavit, se venisse, ut animam suam daret redemptionis pretium pro multis, Mar. 10. 45. Populo autem, seu potius Phariseis & populi primoribus, nihil apertius quod huc pertinere videri possit, eum dixisse memini, quam se bonum pastorem esse, qui animam suam pro ovibus ponat, Jo. 10. 15. Quæ verba idem sibi volunt, ac si Christus dixisset, se in vita discrimen seipsum adducere, ut suos à morte servaret. Quod cum ita sit, non dicam plebi & populo universo ex professo, sed ne populi quidem primoribus obiter quodammodo, iis quæ ipse passurus erat peccata eorum deletum iri, dixit Christus. Quomodo igitur id propterea credi aut debet, aut etiam potest, quia Christi verbis fides sit adhibenda? Id. ibid.

all the People tell them, that *he was the living bread which came down from Heaven* and that *this bread was his flesh which he would give for the life of the world*, Jo. 6. 51. And at another time, that *he was the good Shepherd, who would lay down his life for his sheep* ? Jo. 10. 15.

It must be confessed that he did say all this ; but as to the former of these two Texts, *Socinus* did not think fit to take any notice of it ; whether out of forgetfulness or design, let the Reader judge. And as for the latter, they contain only, as he tells us, a general declaration of Christs love to his people; which was so great, that he could be content, if there were occasion for it, to lay down his life in order to save theirs. And nothing more can be collected from Christs words in that place. But as for that main point, *viz.* that pardon of sins was to be purchased by the death of Christ, and the shedding of his blood for us, this was not known either by the common people among the Jews, nor by their Elders or Rulers ; nay nor by the Disciples of Christ himself ; and therefore it cannot be necessary that it should be known and believed by us, nor can the knowledge and belief of it have any influence upon our justification. So *Socinus*.

It is true indeed, as to what concerns the Death and Resurrection of Christ, those things either as to the matter of fact, or the ends and reasons of them, were not so plainly understood and believed by the Jews in general, or by his own Disciples in particular, as might reasonably be expected from such who were conversant in the writings of the old Testament, where these matters were plainly enough delivered. And therefore we find our Savior upbraiding his Disciples with their *folly and slowness of heart to believe all that the Prophets had spoken* on this subject. Afterwards he drew the vail away that was before their eyes, removed the prejudices which they lay under, and opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures : and shewed them plainly that thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, Luke 24. 46. And what he thus informed them of, he commanded them afterwards to publish to the world : for he appointed them to be

his witnesses of these things v. 48. Jo. 15. 27. And accordingly we find them in pursuance of their Commission, every where and upon all occasions testifying these things, and with great power giving witness of his Resurrection, and consequently of his death, both these being necessarily joined together. I shall not trouble the Reader with multiplicity of examples in this matter. Let it suffice to instance in what St. Paul declares upon this occasion to the *Corinthians*, *Epist. 1. ch. 15. vix.* That the summe of the Gospel which he Preached to them was, *that Christ dyed for our sins, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*, v. 3, 4. This was that Gospel which they had received, and by which alone they could be Saved; this they are required to keep in memory, i. e. frequently to meditate upon and firmly to believe it, otherwise whatever else they had believed, would be altogether vain and insignificant, v. 2. and v. 14. *If Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith is also vain.*

Well? but tho it should be allowed, that it is not necessary to believe the Birth, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, because this brings us backward, and engages us to look after what is past; yet ought we not to have a firm belief, of the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, and that he there lives, ever making intercession for us? because this may and doth respect *Tempus futurum*, (as Socinus before stated this matter) not only what Christ hath done, but what he continues still to do, and will be doing to the end of the World. If you put this question to Socinus, he will tell you ' you need not trouble your selves

1 Cum de Justificatione nostra disputatur, unde ea proficiatur, vis præcipua questionis, si hinc fructus aliquis percipiendus sit, non circa illa versatur quæ extra nos sunt, sed quæ in nobis. Nam quod ad illa attinet quæ extra nos sunt, & tamen justificationis nostræ sunt causæ, quamvis digniora & nobiliora in quæ sunt in nobis, non est ut de his solliciti admodum simus, quatenus querimus ut justificemur. Etenim aut ista sunt & erunt sine ulla nostra cura & industria, nec necesse est ut prius in nobis aliquid certum sit: & quid opus est de eis sollicitum esse? aut nec sunt nec erunt, sine nostra cura & industria, & nisi prius in nobis aliquid certum sit, & sane opus est curare ut istud in nobis habeamus. Ex postea: Quod enim ad misericordiam Dei attinet Christique personam, unacum illis omnibus quæ idem Christus pro nobis fecit & facit, quamvis hæc sunt veræ ac præcipuæ causæ justificationis nostræ; tamen,

elves much about that, any more than about those other matters. For if you desire to be satisfied in that important question concerning your justification, and the remission of sin; and if you would reap any benefit and advantage by that enquiry, then you must not be much concerned about the *external causes* of it, *ea quæ extra nos sunt*, for *vis præcipua questionis non circa illa versatur*; the strels of the enquiry must not ly there, *viz.* upon those things which are without us, such as are the *mercy of God*; the *person of Christ*, together with all those things which the same Christ either already hath, or hereafter shall do for us. These are extrinsecal and foreign to the purpose; and not only *quæ supra*, sed *quæ extra nos*, *nihil ad nos*; and therefore there is no reason, *cur de iis admodum solliciti simus*, that we should trouble our heads or disturb our rest, by any fruitless and anxious thoughts about them.

As if he should say, recal your wandring thoughts from gadding abroad; and gazing upon those things which are either *above or about you*; and turn them *all inward*; see if you have repentance and a reformation wrought within you, and for other things which are without you, *viz. the mercy of God and the merits of Christ*, you need not be solicitous or much concerned about them.

This is the resolution of this great *Casuit*, in that important case about our *Justification*; which if it were to be put into the words and language of the *Quakers* it would amount to this, that we should not so much look after a *Christ without*, as a *Christ within us*; and that the true mystery of Godlyness, is *Christ manifested in his Children*. For what the one expresses in more plain and common termes, the other choose to deliver in their enthusiastick unintelligible Cant; but the design of both is the same, *viz.* to take us off from our Faith and relyance upon the *incarnation and*

men aut jam illarum sumus erimusve participes, antequam in nobis aliquid certum sit, & sic supervacaneum est de illis cogitare quatenus per ea justificari velimus. Aut illorum nec jam sumus nec futuri sumus participes, antequam intra nos certum aliquid sit, Et sic curioso de hoc quærere debemus. Socin. Script. de fide & operibus p. 251.

sufferings of our Savior, which the whole Christian world have as they say, too long and lazily depended upon.

These indeed we are taught to acknowledge to be the only foundation of our hopes, I mean as to the procuring and meritorious cause of mercy and pardon: and here we think we are safe; but from this confidence these seducers would fain withdraw us; and would persuade us to build upon a more slippery and unstable bottom, to rely upon a *reed that will be shaken with every wind*; viz. those virtuous dispositions of mind, which the *Socinians* comprehend under the general name of *probity* and the *Quakers* call the *inward and spiritual appearance of Christ in the Conscience*.

But to return to *Socinus*. By what we have produced out of him one would think, if what he saith be true, that it should not be so necessary as is generally imagined, to believe *Jesus to be the Messiah*; for if it be not necessary to believe that he was born, that he dyed and rose again, ascended into Heaven, &c. I cannot imagine why it should be necessary that we should have any knowledge of him at all. It is true this is said to be necessary, but if men may speak freely and impartially, we may venture to affirm, that it is not such an Article as we are under any indispensable obligation of believing. No? how comes *Socinus* then so often and so peremptorily to affirm it.

It is true he doth so, but it is with a just reservation. It is necessary this should be acknowledged; that is generally speaking, and with regard to men, but not so absolutely necessary if you consider things in themselves. I mean thus: a good life consisting in a conformity to the precepts of the Gospel is the only thing that is acceptable to God, and desirable in it self: but so far as you cannot, or rather so far as it may be presumed that generally speaking, men will

1 For tho' when we speak of the application of pardon, those good dispositions, are conditions absolutely requisite to render us capable of it; yet the true, proper procuring cause of remission of sins are the passion and merits of our Savior, which we must fly to, and rely upon; otherwise all that we can do, will be useless and insignificant to this purpose.

not obey the Laws of Christ who do not *own his authority*; therefore it becomes necessary to believe him to be the *Messiah* or King: that is, it is *accidentally* necessary only, as being a good motive and consideration to persuade us to obey him. But if it were possible for men to arrive at holiness of life, which consists in a compliance with the Laws of the Gospel, only from the consideration of the *decency, usefulness, excellency* of those Laws in themselves (as I know not why this may not be done) then it would be so far from being necessary; to believe in Christ; that it were no great matter whether ever you knew, or heard any thing of him at all.

But is it not a point of respect due to our Savior to have just and honorable conceptions of *his person*, and that indeed which is the foundation of all other external expressions of Homage and duty? No. All respect is shewed by *obedience*, and if that be secured, it is no great matter what your apprehensions of him as to his nature and person may be. Right perhaps it may be said by some, it is not much material to know, and therefore we need not trouble our selves to enquire, whether he be the *Eternal son of God*, who in time took upon him our nature, whereby the *two natures* humane and divine came to be united in *one person*; these are Metaphysical niceties not much to be regarded. But is it not necessary to believe that he was a *true real man*, made up as all other men are of a *true proper material Body* and a rational Soul?

This indeed one would reasonably think should be absolutely necessary, if it be at all necessary to believe any thing concerning him; because if he were not a *true man* at least, one might imagine that it were impossible for him to be the *true*

1 *Secunda questio est, utrum censeam, cum scriptura jubet ut in Christum, aut Christo, aut per Christum credamus, debere hic precipue rationem haberi doctrinae de operibus & vite innocentia, cum prima ac precipua pars doctrinae Christi & Apostolorum sit fidem predicare, id est, quod Jesus est Messias, Dei filius, &c.* Cui questioni sic respondet Socin. Nullus ex praedictis tribus loquendi modis precipue aut per seipsum significat iudicio meo, credere Jesum esse Messiam. Id tamen significant, seu potius complectuntur accessorie, ut dicitur, & per accidens: quatenus videlicet accidit, ut nemo possit Christo considerare, aut ejus verbis credere, nisi prius credat Jesum esse Christum. Id. Ibid. p. 249. 25c.

Messiah. But for all this, saith Socinus, *fieri nihilominus potest, it may so come to pass, that those two persuasions, viz. that Jesus was not a true man, and yet that he was true Christ or Messiah, may be consistent.* For which reason, that opinion which denies the humane nature of Christ, tho it be false and dangerous, yet there is no such harm or malignity in it, as should exclude any such person who holds it, from the communion of the faithful, (provided that he doth acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah) or hinder us from giving him the right hand of fellowship, and owning him for a good Christian, and a true brother in Christ. I doubt not but the pious reader, will be struck with surprize and horror at this strange determination, made by Socinus.

Let us a little consider it. To this purpose we must know, that very early, even in the Apostles days, there arose certain Hereticks, the disciples and followers of Simon, who denyed the truth and reality of Christs humane nature, or that he came in the flesh. These (against whom St. John plainly directed part of his first and second Epistle,) because they affirmed that Christ did not assume a true natural body, in reality, but ἐν δόξῃ, in appearance, in aftertimes were called δόξισται, and Φαντασισται. And these by St. John are styled deceivers and Antichrists, 1 Jo. 4. v. 2, 3. 2 Epist. 7. And by Ignatius² who wrote a little after him, θηρία, and κύνεις λυσσάντες, beasts and mad dogs, whom every body should avoid, and get out of their way, if they had any regard to their own safety.

1 Quod ad illas opiniones attinet, quæ pertinent ad ejus naturam sive essentiam, vix ullæ sunt ex quibus, quantavis falsis, consequatur, eum qui illas tenet, non credere Jesum esse Christum. Sed tamen si ulla est ejusmodi, alia esse non potest, quam quod Jesus Christus verus homo non fuerit. Nam cum ex divinis testimoniis evinci possit, Christum Dei qui promissus fuerat, verum hominem esse debuisse, si Jesus non credatur fuisse verus homo, videtur hinc omnino consequi, ut non credatur, etiam esse Christum Dei. Verum fieri nihilominus potest, ut quis sibi persuadeat, ista duo simul consistere posse: & propterea si aliqui appareat, eum qui neget Christum fuisse verum hominem, habere illum pro vero Christo Dei; crediderim opinionem istam, quamvis plane falsam & periculi plenissimam, non debere censi ejusmodi, quæ istum excludat à numero fidelium ipsius Jesu, sive efficiat, quo minus iste pro vero fratre in Christo agnosci debeat. Id Comment. in Cap. 1. Epist. 1. Johan.

2 Εἰδέναι γὰρ πᾶσι δόξαν ποιεῖν τὸ ὄνομα, (scil. Christianorum) ἡρπᾶσαι, ἀλλὰ πᾶσι πειθομένους ἀνάγκη οὖν, ὥς δὲ ὑμᾶς ὡς θυνία ἐκκλίνειν, εἰδὼν γὰρ κύνεις λυσσάντες, λαλῶντες, ὥς δὲ ὑμᾶς πωλεῖσθαι ὄντας διδρασκόντας. Ign. Epist. ad Eph. p. 21.

And there was great reason for this caution and advice: be-
cause this opinion of theirs is ſo pernicious and execrable, that no
words can ſufficiently expreſs the danger and impiety of it. It
doth not only undermine the authority, but directly overthrow
the truth of the holy Scriptures. It is infinitely diſhonorable
to Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and plainly overturns the whole
frame and deſign of the Chriſtian Religion, which, if this opi-
nion be true, muſt be a *downright falſhood* from firſt to laſt, and
the *greateſt cheat* that ever was impoſed on the world.

The Apoſtles and Evangeliſts give us an account of his
Mother who conceived and brought him forth, as alſo of all
his and her Anceſtors from whom he *as to the fleſh* was de-
ſcended. They ſay he *took upon him the ſeed of Abraham*, and
was *partaker of fleſh and blood* as the reſt of his brethren; to
whom he was in all points like, ſin only excepted. For he
was liable to the ſame natural infirmitys of hunger and thirſt
and wearineſs as we all are; eating and drinking, and ſleep-
ing as other men are wont to do.

It is true indeed, ſay the Diſciples of Saturninus, Baſilides,
and the reſt of that Antichriſtian crew, he did ſeem to do ſo,
but it was only in appearance; the ſenſes of the ſpectators
were impoſed upon, and it was all juggle and deception. But
do not the Scriptures tell us that he took an human body on
purpoſe that he might *dye for us*, and accordingly that he was
Crucified, dead, and buried, and that the third day he roſe from the dead?
They do, it muſt be confeſſed, inform us of ſuch matters; but yet
none of all this was done in truth and reality, but only in
δοκίμοις, in appearance as we ſaid before. Well! but are not
the Apoſtles then hereby found *faſe witneſſes of God, becauſe*
they have teſtified of God that he raiſed up Chriſt; who really
never dyed or was laid in the Grave, and conſequently could
not riſe from thence? And if ſo, is there not an end of the
Chriſtian Religion; becauſe by this account 1 Cor. 15.
Their Preaching muſt be in vain, and our Faith vain; we muſt ſtill
be in our ſins, lyable to death, and under the dominion of him
that had the power of it, that is the Devil?

All this muſt undoubtedly be true, and muſt neceſſarily fol-
low

low from this opinion; which denies that Christ *came in the flesh* or took our nature upon him. But can they therefore who maintain it, be justly esteemed our friends and brethren in Christ? yes saith Socin. they may, as long as they hold to that fundamental Article, that *Jesus is the Messiah*: for these persuasions, as we heard before, may be consistent; and the latter of these is so powerfull an antidote against any the most pestilent heresies, that it certainly destroys the venom and malignity of them. This must be very good news to some persons if it be true, and the great Socinus hath assured us of the truth of it. He hath told us so indeed, but I must beg his pardon if I do not presently take things upon his bare word: for tho hereby he hath shewn a great charity, and concern for his *Heretical brethren*: yet upon examination I am afraid it will be found, that he hath had no great regard either for the *honor of our Savior*, or the *welfare of the Christian Religion*. The former perhaps he thought did deserve his compassion and might want his help: whilst the latter possibly might be able to shift well enough for themselves: And so indeed they must in the present case, or else they will be left in a very deplorable, helpless condition, for any assistance that Socinus is willing to afford them.

The question then returns concerning the Messiah, which denoting an office, suppose, that of a *King and Sovereign*: it must certainly be lodged in some subject; there must be some *substratum* in which this authority resides, because it cannot subsist by it self. In short it must be vested in some person or nature, and what should that be? was this *Jesus*, this *Messiah* that we speak of, possessed of a *divine nature*? no saith Socinus that was impossible. Did he take upon him, or did he exercise this office in an angelical nature? no saith the Apostle, if we may believe him, *he took not upon him the nature of Angels*, 2. Heb. Well, did he then take upon him the nature of a man? no say the abovenamed Hereticks, the *δοκῆται*, he appeared in the shape, but did not assume the true *real nature of a man*. No? Then he must be a cheat and Impostor, and the greatest that ever was in the world.

He

He allways declared that he *was a man, and the son of man*. After his Resurrection he appealed to the senses of his Disciples, even to that which is least liable to mistake, *viz. their feeling*, for he did not only ¹ eat and drink in their sight, but in order to cure their doubting, he did both shew them his *hands and his feet*, and required them to ² *handle and feel his flesh and his bones*, to convince them that he was not a spirit or a spectre. And indeed after this proof and confirmation which he hath given us of the *truth and reality* of his humane nature: it is not possible for any man to conceive him to be a *spirit*, but he must at the same time believe that he was an *Evil spirit*. For the whole course and series of his pretended life, according to this opinion, must be nothing else but delusion and imposture. His actions must be all *phantastical*, his miracles *illusions*; or if they were real, they must be performed by a diabolical force and power, *and he must cast out Devils by Beelzebub the prince of them*. For no good Angel could be engaged in so wicked a design, as to animate I know not what *phantome* and *spectre*, and by so doing, to contrive and carry on such a cheat as this must be, so lasting and so pernicious to mankind.

And now is it possible for such a person to be *the Messiah*? Perhaps it will be answered, no, it was not possible for him to be any thing but what he pretended to be, *viz. a true real man*: but however some well meaning men might be under an error and mispersuasion, and might *think otherwise*. But can they *who think so*, deserve the name of Christians and Brethren? For can any thing be thought of that could tend more to the defamation of our Holy Religion and the blessed Author of it, than such an opinion, which would beyond all contradiction, justify the charge of *Celsus* against our Savior, who saith he was *a Magician and a Conjuror*? And *Hierocles* could not be blamed for comparing and preferring *Apollonius* before him.

And thus we see what the consequences of that notion are,

¹ Luke, 24. 42. 43. ² Ibid. Verses 39. 40.

which reduces all faith in Christ, to this single perswasion, that *he is the Messiah*; for this will either justify, or at least excuse all other apprehensions of him, tho never so false and scandalous. For whether you conceive him God, or only a Man; a Spirit, or as having a Body, and that either real or phantastical; a righteous person or a deceiver, a true Prophet or a Magician; it is not much material: for in all the forementioned cases, provided you hold to this foundation, you still continue a true Disciple and brother in Christ. So that you may deal with your Savior as the Jews and Romans did at his arraignment; you may spit in his face, blindfold and buffet him; provided at the same time, you bow the knee and cry Hail O King. But then you must be sure wisely and well to distinguish between his personal and political capacity; if you reverence him in the one, tho you despise, or do ay act of desight to him in the other, there is no great harm in all that.

By all which we see, how by excluding faith out of our schemes and systems of Divinity, the Christian Religion, as to what concerns the doctrines of it, is in danger of being destroyed, and betrayed into the hands of those infidels, which for distinction sake, we said might be reckoned within the pale of the Church. For hereby we are made to believe, that all the errors of the understanding if they are not inconsistent with piety, tho otherwise never so repugnant to the truths of the Gospel, are innocent, or at least very pardonable mistakes. For in one word, obedience is the true Evangelical Faith, and an ill life the only Heresy.

What remains therefore, but that we should explode the distinction between Orthodox and Heretick, Believer and Infidel? For tho these latter thro a superstitious custome which hath too long prevailed, are among some men become names of obloquy and reproach; yet really and truly they are but *bruta fulmina*, Theological scarecrows, near bugbears invented to fright fools

1 All things that are necessary to be believed or known, in the opinion of Socin. respect only the precepts or prohibitions of the Gospel. *Id enim iter, quod ad salutem eternam sacra designant litera cognoscendum sufficit. In reliquis si quis occurrat Error, nemo ob eam calo excludetur.* Socin. Epist. 3. ad Dudich. p. 522.

and Children, into the belief of I know not what incomprehensible doctrines and mysteries, which *wise men* laugh at, and only *weak men* reverence and admire.

But *zilly*, As this notion gives too great encouragement to our Enemies within the Church, so it affords too great advantage to those who are without it, I mean *Jews, Mahometans, and Pagans*, all which will find their account in this notion that confounds *faith with obedience*. And indeed it seems to be but too plainly calculated to undermine all *revealed*, and particularly the authority of the *Christian Religion*, which is chiefly distinguished from all others, by the discovery of certain supernatural truths, and some other duties which are peculiar to the *Christian Religion* but which are consequent to, and necessarily dependent upon those truths. For take away the Articles and Mysteries of our Faith, and then tell me what there is in the *Christian Religion* that doth absolutely distinguish it from other Religions, either *Jewish, Mahometan, or Pagan*; I mean any other-wise than as they stand distinguished from natural Religion. It is true indeed it hath laid aside what (now since our Saviors coming) is superfluous in the *Jewish*, or what was superstitious and impious in the Religion of the *Pagans*; but when those excrescencies are cut off, it seems only (according to this notion) to have reduced things to their primitive state, and that *ancient natural Religion*, which without the assistance of a *supernatural revelation* was at first professed and practised in the world.

And if so, what such cogent reason can be offered to us, which should necessarily induce us to believe, that our blessed Savior was a messenger sent immediately from God, and his Apostles were divinely inspired, or that the Religion which they published had its Original by a revelation from Heaven; and was not rather the product of bare, but true, right reason? For at this rate, they who first published this doctrine, might seem not to need the extraordinary direction of the *spirit of God*, but only of that *spirit within them*, which is the *Candle of the Lord*, which some tell us, is that *light which enlightens every man that cometh into the world*.

Perhaps it will be said, that it is true, the Christian Re-

ligion is nothing else but a *systeme of Morality*, but however, the noblest systeme of Moral precepts, and those required of men in higher degrees, directed by more sublime principles, and enforced with more cogent arguments and motives, than ever yet were offered to the world. Be it so, yet this will not distinguish it in *nature and kind* from natural Religion; it only gives it the preference in point of *degrees of perfection*: which account must necessarily abate much of that reverence and esteem which men hitherto have had for it; who will unavoidably be hereby induced to account it but a *mean institution* in comparison; as being but the same exactly as to its whole frame and design with *natural religion*, only in some measure more perfect than it. And if so, it can by no means answer the *Elogies and Commendations*, which have been given, nor consequently rise up to the height of that *Character* which hath been made, or those *noble Ideas* which have thence been framed of it.

For that such things should be so long foretold, and such universal hopes thereby be raised in the minds of men; the whole world in a manner, but particularly the nation of the *Jews*, being strangely alarmed with the predictions, and by them with the expectation of a mighty person, who was to be sent immediately from God; either as having *Originally been in Heaven*, as we say, as the *Socinians* tell us, who *was to be summoned up thither*, in order to receive particular information from God of what he was afterwards to publish to the world: And then that all this information, of which so great, so unusual, so universal an expectation was raised, should dwindle into the discovery only of that in which *right reason* had before instructed mankind; or at most of a few additions to the *great pandect of the Law of nature*; this I say, must needs prove a great disappointment; and consequently create a disdain and contempt, rather than raise a reverence and esteem for the Faith and the great author and finisher of it.

It is certain by this account, our blessed Savior will be put only upon the *same level*; or at best, with some degrees of preference,

preference, he will hereby be placed only in the same rank and order of men, with *Confucius* and *Mongo-Capae*, the two great Apostles of *China* and *Peru*. To whom, their Disciples will think it no great presumption, to adde *Mahomet* and *Socinus*; who as they tell us, were raised up on purpose, to restore the worship of the one true God, and to reform those abuses and errors which had corrupted the purity, and defaced the beauty of the ancient and true Religion.

In short, if *natural reason*, I mean when it is not stained and sullied with any false and corrupt notions, by its own brightness and splendor is sufficient to inform and instruct us in the precepts of moral virtue, and that our happiness depends entirely upon our obedience to them; that is, independently, as one *Socinian* expresses it, or *exclusively of Faith*, as another phrases it; then there is an end of all revealed Religion strictly so called: for whatever is superadded to those necessary and fundamental dictates of reason are to be esteemed but frivolous matters, *speculative niceties, Metaphysical dreams and whimsies*.

I know the *Unitarians* sometimes tell us, that sundry of the precepts of *Christ*, but especially the promises which are annexed as an encouragement to the practice of them, are of that sublime nature, that they surpass the invention of reason; and consequently the *Christian Religion* in that respect is sufficiently distinguished from *natural*, and the revelation of it is so far useful and necessary.

1 Let us conclude here and seriously think, that we shall all be judged by *Christ* at the last day only according to this rule. (*viz.* that body of Christian morality, which he had said just before, makes up the great and whole design of the Gospel) independently on those opinions which make up the subject of our disputes. *An exhort. to a free inquiry into the Doctrines of Rel.* p. 15. The essential part of Religion consists not in Theory, but in practice. And it is undoubtedly in consequence of this principle, that the whole tenor of the Gospel declares to us, that we shall be judged, not according to our belief, but according to our works. *Discourse of human reason* p. 9. The Philosophers (*whose authorities he cites and approves*) have unanimously agreed in teaching, not only that right reason was capable to guide us in the practice of virtue, but also that our happiness depends entirely upon our obedience to its lessons p. 25.

First

First as to what concerns the *precepts of the Gospel*; it must be acknowledged that sundry of them do indeed exceed the discourses of bare reason tho never so bright and defecate: but then I say they are such as depend upon the knowledge of the necessary and fundamental articles of our faith, (such as are the *Trinity, Incarnation, Redemption of the world* by the sufferings of our Savior) and without which knowledge they cannot be performed; as I shall shew by and by. But for these duties our adversaries are not concerned; and indeed it is impossible they should: except at the same time they would acknowledge the doctrine of *our Saviors Mediation* as it is stated and received in the *Catholic Church*, which is the great and fundamental principle of our *Christian duty*.

The *precepts* therefore which they contend for (except it be that one which concerns the *invocation and worship of Christ*, about which they themselves are divided) are only those which concern *charity, truth, righteousness, temperance*, together with those other *moral virtues*, which as I said before, they comprehend under the general name of *probity*. Now as to these and all other the duties of Religion, which have no relation to the articles and mysteries of our faith, it may reasonably be doubted, whether there be any precept of the Gospel, which hath not been discovered by the *light of nature* and approved and recommended as *agreeable to reason*, tho perhaps not strictly and peremptorily prescribed under the *notion and obligation of a law*. I say perhaps: tho some of our *modern Unitarians* have expressed themselves without that caution and reservedness, and have been positive in it; telling us *that whatever additions have been made by our Savior to the first law, were only by way of remembrance and reinforcement*: and that they do not so much contain a discovery of new duties, as a recognition of old ones, by time indeed and evil customs antiquated and forgotten.

1 *Id. ibid* p. 78. The laws and rules of true Christianity are in substance the very same with the laws of nature. p. 72. The ancient Philopopers were real instances and examples of that very light which shone in them, and directed them without extraordinary revelation to the same duties which have been farther enjoyed us by revelation. p. 35. p. 30.

And 2dly, As to what concerns the *promises of the Gospel*, and particularly the promise of eternal life, we know the belief of this in general hath prevailed among men of all Sects and Religions, tho in point of clearness and manifestation, the *Christian Religion* hath the advantage above all other institutions: not only above the *Mahometan and Pagan*, where the knowledge of a future life hath been depraved by many profane and impious mixtures; but likewise above *pure natural*, and even the *Jewish Religion*.

But tho this shews us *the excellence*, it doth not prove the necessity of the Christian Religion, according to the Socinians. For the only things which the Gospel discovers worthy our notice, are the *precepts* and the *promises* which it contains. The *precepts*, they say, are the same with those of natural religion. And as to what concerns the *promises*, we need only be convinced 'of that which is the sum and substance of them, viz. that there is such a thing as eternal life after this; which shall be the reward of all virtuous actions. But this as I said before is more or less to be found in all Religions, and hath been the motive to a virtuous life even among the wiser Pagans.'

And thus this account of Socinus, instead of advancing the reputation, and convincing us of the necessity of the Christian doctrine, plainly encourages an *indifference* in all religions: upon which account we find him and his disciples in their writings speaking very favorably of *Mahometans, Jews, and Pagans*.

Concerning *Mahomet*, they tell us, 'that it is affirmed of him by divers Historians, (of very good credit and authority I

1 Let it not be said that the happiness which these Philosophers speak of (*viz. Juvenal, Arist. Sen. Cic. &c.*) relates only to this life, and that they had not that prospect of a future felicity which animates us Christians to our duty. I know not what can be said more strong or sound, both concerning that future state and the way that leads to it, than some passages of theirs. *Discourse of Reas.* p. 27. 'Tis that light which shines forth in their discourses, who had not the advantage of supernatural revelation. They saw the being of a God: the duty of adoring him; the immortality of the soul; and the necessity of leading a virtuous life here, in order to the obtaining of a happy state hereafter, with these thoughts they were inflamed, and by the direction of these truths they steered the course of their actions. p. 30.

2 Letter of resolution. p. 18.

presume, otherwise their account of him would be insignificant, and therefore not fit to be produced) *that he had no other design in pretending to be a Prophet, but to restore the belief of the unity of God, which at the same time was extirpated among the Christians of the East, by the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation. And that Mahomet intended not that his Religion should be esteemed a new Religion, but only the restitution of the Christian Religion; and therefore that the Learned men among the Mahometans call themselves the true Disciples of the Messias.* Whilst we in the mean time who believe the Trinity, and other parts of the Christian Doctrine, are in their esteem no better than Pagans and Heathens. It is true some mixtures ¹ of folly there are in the Religion of Mahomet, but alas what Religion, say they, is without them?

2dly, For the Pagans, they tell us, that if they would but stand true to those *stable principles of eternal truth*, which right reason dictates, and which all wise men, of all persuasions agree in, we should find no reason to quarrel with, or disapprove of their Religion. It is true there are certain foolish, superstitious and idolatrous rites introduced among them: but that is the fault of the men, not of their Religion. Besides, these errors may prevail among the *rude and illiterate, vulgar*; but the *wise men and Philosophers* among them, both of former and latter times, believe and practise better things. And in short their belief and practice was the very same with ours. *Christianity*, say they, ² *is nothing else but the law of right reason*; and ³ *the laws and rules of true Christianity are in substance the very same with the laws of nature, which were formerly writ in the heart of the* ⁴ *Heathens.* The ⁵ *corruption indeed into which mankind had fallen made them stand in need of some farther admonition, to remind them of their duty, and the Gospel was of this sort, accompanied with some circumstances more advantageous to mankind than the bare light of nature.* But ⁶ *after all these advantages we must return to our first principles; and the law of nature is the foundation of all Christs instructions, so that nothing is revealed in the Gospel but what arises from that law and*

¹ *Discourse of Humane Reason* p. 32. There is more or less of such mixture in every profession. ² *Discourse of reason*. p. 54. ³ p. 72. ⁴ p. 38. ⁵ p. 72-73. ⁶ p. 75.

is built upon it. Agreeable to what is thus affirmed by this Author, we find another Unitarian, in his *Impartial account of the word Mystery*, assigning the ends and reasons why any Religion was revealed to mankind; and what the intent of the Holy Ghost was in that revelation, which he reduces to these two heads. 1st, *It was given us, he saith, to excite and preserve among men the natural principles of Morality and Religion, which nature or the universal Tradition had engrafted in their hearts.* 2dly, *It was given to abridge our studies and enquiries, by making easy to us the knowledge of our happiness, and the means whereby we may be fitted to attain it.* Philosophers might have clearer notions about this point than simple men, but they must arrive at it by long reasonings. Thus by the light of nature and the art of reasoning, men might arrive at the knowledge of the goodness, justice, and power of God in rewarding just men: nay from Gods general promises, one might infer by several consequences the particular reward of the resurrection of the dead. But since revelation hath made those truths common to those who cannot reach to an exact reasoning, the meanest men have as much knowledge about this matter, as the most learned can have. p. 22.

So that in the Revelation which the Gospel affords us of the truths which concern our Salvation, God seems principally to have consulted the benefit of the weak and illiterate, of which the bulk of mankind is composed, who may now by the help of that *clear Revelation* afforded them, at first view behold those great truths, which otherwise would require Learning and Philosophy to inform them of; and all men are not fitted for such learned and laborious deductions. But when all is done, according to his opinion, *Revelation* instructs us in no *new truths*, which *reason* could not inform us of: only the former brings us in a more compendious way to the knowledge of our duty, and our happiness; which the latter conducts men to, as certainly, but with more leisure, and by going farther about.

Lastly as to the *Jews* tho' there may be some difficulties which attend the case of these men, above that of the before-named *Mahometans and Pagans*; because they are not ignorant of Christ, as the *Heathens* are; nor do they only deny him

to be the Son of God, with the *Mahometans*; but account him to be a *false Prophet and an Impostor*, whilst the former make an honorable mention of him as of a *great Prophet, and the word and breath of God*: yet for all this there is no reason why we should renounce their fellowship and communion. For as long as they embrace and practise the precepts of the Gospel, which as we observed before, are but the same in substance with the Laws of the two Tables; and believe the promises of eternal life, and are animated to obedience by that faith; they know and do, all that is necessary either for *belief or practice*. And therefore, for all their disowning and denial of our Savior, they may still be accounted *true believers*, and the *Disciples of the Messias*, as well as the *Mahometans*, who are sometime willing to be esteemed such, as we heard before. For *ad verum* ¹ *Christum amplectendum* saith *Socinus*, to embrace Christ, it is not necessary that you should *know his nature*, but that you should *comply with his will*: nay tho you *blaspheme his person*, yet if you *obey his commands*, there is no great harm in all that. In short to *believe Christ to be the Messias*, is only to *submit to his authority*, and the best way of doing that is by observing his precepts; and they who do so, have a title to our fellowship, and should therefore be taken by us *pro veris in Christo fratribus*, true friends and brethren in Christ. For what concerns our duty and morality, that only is *intelligible, useful and solid*; all the rest are but *mysteries, allegories, and useless speculations*. Discourse of Hum. Reas. p. 51.

¹ Ut quis verum amplectatur Christum, non alia re opus est, quam ut præcepta & promissa illius recte cognita habeat: immo ne promissa quidem adeo exquisitè perçessitata habere necesse est, modo summam eorum vitam æternam & beatam esse constet, dummodo præcepta recte intelligantur. Socin. Epist. ad And. Dudith. op. Tom. 1. p. 500. Ubique Jesu Christi doctrina, quod ad ejus præcepta attinet, ilibata conservata fuit, ibi sine dubio ipse Jesus Christus fuisse vere dici potest. Id. Ep. 1. ad Radec. p. 373. Ad Christi aspectabilem Ecclesiam constituendam nihil aliud requiritur, quam vera cognitio præceptorum Christi. Est quidem Deus & Christus fundamentum salutis nostræ: sed non quatenus eorum essentiam & substantiam recte novimus, sed quatenus dei voluntatem per Christum patefactam tenemus. In sacris literis Christum cognoscere, non significat illius essentiam vel substantiam novisse, sed voluntatem, eique se obedientem præstare. Ibid. 374. 375.

And thus we see how at long run this notion of *Socinus* hath plainly subverted the Christian Church, which our Savior saith he would build, not only upon *obedience to his Laws*, but likewise upon the *belief of his truths*, and particularly that great truth, that he was *the son of the living God*. Withal we see that this account effectually overthrows the distinction between the *Christian and natural Religion*, except as we said before, in point of perfection and degree; which one would think should be an insuperable objection against it, among any who pretend to have any reverence for their Savior; or any regard for that Religion which is called by his name.

But to this our men of Morals, as they would be accounted, the great pretended *admirers of probity*, but *underminers of Christianity*, have contrived a ready answer, *viz.* that the world hath been too long gulled with the conceit of I know not what regard that ought to be had, for opinions which have been universally received among Christians: but in order to find out the truth, we ought to lay aside all those prejudices which we have entertain'd for the *Church, Antiquity, Fathers, Councils*: nay you must go farther, for that alone will not do your business, except you likewise shake off all superstitious reverence ² for the *Christian name* and religion, for which its true men generally, through the prejudice of their Education *entertain a great*, but it is as one of them tells us, *a mistaken respect; which either casts a mist before the understanding, and hinders us from discerning the truth; or else so overawes the minds*

¹ What is it then that can frighten us from making use of that light which God hath given us to direct us in the conduct of our lives? I see nothing but that empty phantome of the 'pretended authority of the Church, which still presents it self to the troubling of weak minds, tho reason and common sense have long since chased it away from their habitation. But what is then that so venerable a Church for which I am bound to have so great a deference, that I must blindly receive her decisions? *Id. p. 75. (vide Episcop. Th. Inst. lib. 1. cap. 1.)*

² But however if a mistaken respect for the name of a Christian do so overawe any mens minds, that they are afraid to admit the universality of this light I contend for *etc. viz. the light of reason and the law of nature which he affirms is sufficient to guide men to virtue and happiness*. And to bring into question the sufficiency of this light and knowledge is, *he saith*, to renounce even Christianity it self. *Id. p. 81. 82.*

of men, that they are afraid to admit the universality of that light, which is designed to conduct men to virtue and happiness.

There hath indeed for many Ages been a wide and unreasonable distance kept among men upon the account of some different persuasions in the affairs of Religion. But now we must know, and we are chiefly beholding to the Unitarians¹ for the discovery, that the partition-wall is broken down, and all the world is become but one fold under the great Shepherd, that invisible spirit that animates and governs the universe, whom the wiser Chinese, as we are told, the Disciples of the great Confucius, worship as becomes wise men, sine longo & operoso superstitionis apparatu, that is, without Temples, Priests, and Altars. The general Assembly and congregation of men throughout the world, is the only true *Catholick Church*: whatever other pale you may think fit to set up, if it be not wide and comprehensive enough to enclose all the Children of Adam, ought to be pulled down, as being contrary to that true spirit of Love, that universal charity which Religion and right reason recommend to the world. There is now no difference to be made between Jew and Gentile, Christian and Mahometan, Catholick and Heretick. All these names of distinction, by which the peace of the world, and the quiet of mankind have been so long, and so unreasonably disturbed, ought to be laid aside. For tho' they may differ about matters of less consequence, of Opinion and Speculation; yet amidst this variety of judgements, there should be no breach of affection between them, who all agree in the practice of the necessary and fundamental duties of piety and virtue.

What now remains, but that according to the wise advice

¹ Is it the universality of a Church that denotes it to be a true one? All other professions are confined within the narrow limits of some Countrey &c. But this universal Law of right reason is spread over the face of the whole Earth; and so far from excluding any from the hopes of salvation upon such frivolous accounts, that the followers of it embrace all persons that are truly virtuous with an equal affection, and do by no means exclude any man from the communion of the Church, for a meer contrariety of opinion. p. 77. That is true comprehension which comprehends all mankind. *Id. in the Preface.* p. 3.

that is given us, we should at length rouse up our spirits, & chase away those vain terrors which have so long surrounded us, and shake off the tyranny of those prejudices, with which we have been so long, and so unhappily possessed. We have for many ages been kept in awe, under the apprehension and dread of I know not what frightful doctrines and mysteries; Socinus was a messenger sent from Heaven, like the angel to St. Peter, and hath knocked off those chains and fetters wherewith our apprehensions and judgments have been shackled, and hath set us at liberty: for hereby we have got rid of the troublesome and difficult task of believing; and that not only of what relates to the person and nature of Christ, but if you please, of what concerns the Existence and Providence of God likewise, if you find those notions irksome and sit uneasy upon your understanding.

For since the end of all Religion is to regulate and govern our actions, if it be possible to arrive at the knowledge, and to be persuaded to practise those Moral virtues which perfect and adorn our nature, by the meer consideration of their usefulness and decency; why should it be thought necessary to have a belief, or to make the acknowledgement of one true God? At this rate, as far as I can perceive, it will be but an indifferent matter, (*modo vita sanctimonia salva sit*) whether a man deny the Existence of God, or acknowledge his Infinite perfections: whether he believes his Providence, or derides the conceit of it as a vain and superstitious opinion, fit to fright Children and weak Women, or weaker men: but not to move wise Men who will choose virtue for it self, as being agreeable to the dignity of their natures, and serviceable to the great ends of Government, viz. the preservation of humane Society, and to keep up good order in the world. For so long as you can arrive at the End, there is no great matter what means you make use of to attain it.

Epicurus was one of them of old who denied the providence of God; and yet in the mean time, if we believe the character which his friends have given of him, was a man of a strict

1 Humane Reason. p. 8. 2 Vid. Diog. Laert. Lib. 10. De vita & moribus. Epic. & Petri Gassendi apologiam pro eodem.

Life and severe Morals: recommending to his disciples temperance and chastity, justice and fortitude, not only in his discourses, but likewise by his example. And in short, he was, as they tell us, a person of great justice, virtue and probity. It is true, he did not seem so much concerned for that branch of Religion which consisted in the *External worship of the Deity*; but his forementioned virtues made a sufficient recompence for that defect: and the excellent *Seneca* hath very wisely, as some think, observed, *satis Deum coluit quisquis imitatus est*. Obedience is the best sort of worship, and he who complys with the Laws of his Creator, doth sufficiently own his authority, and thereby makes an abundant recompence for his care and government of the world. 'What need you lift up your hands or your eyes to Heaven, and look up unto God: look into your selves, saith the same Divine Author, Contemplate and Adore the mighty Deity that inhabits and resides there.

And then, as to what concerns the *Being and Existence of God*, *Socinus* hath allready stated that matter, viz. That as faith in Christ consists in the obedience to his Commands; so the knowledge of God consists in a good life, and a performance of those duties which the Law of nature and right reason prescribe. And therefore, he that doth so, may be said to know God, and to perform those things that are acceptable to him, tho' otherwise he be totally ignorant of his Nature and Being. Nay, this is a notion that *Socinus* is so fond of, that he repeats it once and again. In his *Prelections Chap. 2d.* and his *Commentaries upon the fourth Chapter of the first Epistle of St. John, ver. 6.* where he hath a long discourse on this subject, and thinks he hath plainly made it out, beyond all contradiction, "That by the knowledge of God in that place, nothing else is meant but
"animi

1 *Epist. 95. Vis Deos propitiare? bonus esto, satis. &c.* 2 *Non sunt ad calum elevande manus, nec exorandus Editus ut nos ad aures simulacri admittat, prope est ad te Deus, tecum est, intus est. Id. Ep. 41.*

3 *Cum igitur ex Deo esse, in ista Christi sententia (cap. 8. scil. Evang. Joh. v. 47.) Et consequenter in ipsa quam prae manibus habemus Apostoli sententia, nihil aliud sit quam esse probum & cupidum ea faciendi quae Deo placent, hinc concludendum est per ea quae modo dicebamus, Dei cognitionem de qua hic Apostolus loquitur, illud idem esse.*

"*animi probitas, & studium ea faciendi quæ Deo probantur, An honest disposition and endeavour to do those things, i. e. those Moral actions, which God approves of. And that every such person who is probitatis studiosus, possessed of those virtuous dispositions, may be said to have Dei cognitionem, the knowledge of God, posito quod nullam certam notitiam habeat quod Deus sit; tho' otherwise he hath no certain knowledge or belief that there is such a thing as a God. And in his Prelections, Chap. 2. he repeats the same thing, in the like words. Qui rationi obedit, (which he calls verbum Dei interius) Deo obedit etiam si alioqui ipsum Deum non esse quidem aut sciat aut cogitet". That is in short, tho' a man be an Atheist, there is no great harm in it, provided that otherwise he be a person of probity.*

It is true, this probity he saith is not a perfect knowledge of God, and indeed it would be a miracle if it should: tho' I am apt to think, that most other people are of opinion, that any the lowest degrees of knowing God, are inconsistent with the total ignorance of him, such as is supposed in this case; but however he is content it should pass under the name of *cognitio Dei imperfecta*, an imperfect knowledge of God. But yet as imperfect as

esse. Et sane nemo potest cupidus esse ea faciendi quæ Deo placeant; sed neque etiam ullo alio pacto probitatis studiosus, quin aliquam Dei cognitionem habeat; quandoquidem is qui animi probi est, & id quod rectum est amantis, posito etiam quod nullam certam notitiam habeat quod Deus sit, tamen potest ille suo modo dici Deum cognoscere, quatenus ea approbat quæ Deo placeant, & sic ipsum Deum quamvis ignorans approbat. Socin. Comment. in 4. Cap. Epist. Joh. v. 6.

Cum considero eum locum præcipue quem supra citavimus, in Christi verbis Joh. 8. cum quo hic noster consentit, & ad illum prorsus respicere videtur, iis præterea junctis quæ superius hac de re diximus, in ea potius sententia acquiesco, ut hic Apostolus de imperfecta Dei cognitione loquatur, non autem de perfectione. Cum nihil impedit, quando aliquin phrasis ista ad utrumque sensum accommodari potest, quo minus, licet Johannes alibi in hac Epistola, idque fortasse semper, cognoscendi Deum nomine perfectionem hujus generis Dei cognitionem intelligat, nihilominus tamen hic iisdem verbis de imperfecta loquatur. Nam certe nullo pacto negari posse videtur, quin Christus in verbis illis suis, phrasim esse ex Deo ita accipi velit, ut non de perfectione, sed de imperfecta tali: Dei cognitione eum loqui statuendum sit. Atque jam ostendimus & pro contraria sententia modo ursumus, Idem hic esse cognoscere Deum, quod esse ex Deo. Id. Ibid. We see how fond he is of this notion, in that he ventures to strain and wrest the words of the Apostle, quite contrary to the plain, and as he himself acknowledges, to the constant sense and meaning of them every where in this Epistle, to give countenance to it.

it is, it is highly commendable in it self, and helps to recommend men, to the favor of God, and to constitute them his Children. For these three phrases, *esse ex Deo*, *esse Dei filium*, *natum esse ex Deo*, signify the same thing. Again, *cognoscere Deum*, & *ex Deo esse*, are likewise equipollent termes. Lastly whoever is *vir probus*, & *cupidus ea faciendo quæ Deo probantur*, is, saith he, *ex Deo est*, & *cognoscit Deum*.

And now what hinders but that we should give the right hand of fellowship to those inhabitants of *Brasil*, *Soldania*, and *Paraguaris*, among whom they say there is found no notion of a God? For tho they have no Religion, and some of them are bereft in a manner of common sense, yet there may be found among them such who are *probitatis studiosi*; and if so, then they may be said to *know God*, and consequently to *be of God*, and to *be born of God*; and then who can forbid us to own them, *pro veris fratribus in Deo*, true friends and brethren in God; as the followers of *Saturninus* and *Basilides*, and the rest of that Antichristian tribe, were to be accounted and acknowledged by us for true brethren in Christ, as we heard before. And I think the former have as good a title to our friendship in one respect, as the latter have in the other. And thus we see where this popular and seemingly inoffensive, but really pernicious opinion, hath led these men, who have pursued this argument I confess, with a very bold and extraordinary strain; but what commendations they deserve for so doing, must be left to God, and all Honest men to judge.

In the next place I am to shew, that this position is not only destructive of the *Christian doctrine*, but likewise of the *Christian practice*, having a very malignant influence even upon *that*, which our adversaries seem to be so much concerned for, *viz. piety and a good life*. In order to make this out, I must rise a little higher, and lay down certain general propositions, which carry their own evidence along with them, and cannot well be denied by such who own *any*, or at least the Christian Religion.

And here first I think, I may take it for granted, that the great end which God proposed to himself in the first creating,

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as he hath ever since done in the government of the world, *is his own glory*: and that all other ends are but *subordinate* as being *subservient* to this. 2dly, And consequently, that the design of all Religion whether natural or revealed, is to enable and instruct us how we may best *bring glory to our great Creator*, which to do, as I now intimated, is the principal end of our Creation. 3dly, That the first act of Religion, and indeed the foundation of all the rest, consists in our *acknowledgment of his being*, and in having just and honorable conceptions of his infinite nature, and adorable perfections. And this will necessarily produce such actions in our minds, as are suitable and agreeable thereunto. That is, the consideration of *his infinite power, wisdom, truth, goodness and justice, &c.* will dispose us *to love, reverence and adore him*; *to believe him, to place our hopes, trust, and confidence in him*; to submit to his authority, to fear his displeasure, and in every thing to comply with his will, by what way soever that comes to be made known to us, whether by natural reason, or supernatural revelation.

4thly, That the exercise of Religion consists not only in the *internal acts of hope, love, faith, and admiration*; but likewise in the *external expressions* of those inward motions and dispositions of the mind, and particularly in those actions which make up that which is properly called *the worship of God*, such as are *prayer, and praise, &c.* which have him immediately for their object; and thereby are distinguished from those other acts of Religion, which more directly relate to, and are conversant about *our neighbors or our selves*. 5thly, That God almighty best knows what kind of *service and worship* is most agreeable to his own nature and perfections; what most conduces to promote the great ends of his own glory, and the happiness of mankind, and consequently is most acceptable to him. For this reason it is highly fitting that we should observe *his prescriptions*, and govern our selves by *his directions* in this affair.

I Τὸς περὶ τῆς θεῆς εὐσεβείας ἰδίᾳ ὅτι κατέσταντο ἐκείνῳ ἔστιν, ὅθεν καὶ ἀποδείκνυται περὶ αὐτοῦ ἔχειν, ὡς ὅντων καὶ διοικούντων τὰ πάντα καλῶς καὶ δικαίως. Epict. Enchir. cap. 38. *Vi- de Simplicii Comment. in hunc locum.*

And for want of this observation and regard had to the directions of God almighty, with relation to his worship, men have run into innumerable, and endless extravagancies. For when they once put their *own reason* in opposition to *his infinite wisdom*, or their own *humors and fancies*, to the plain and open declarations of *his will and pleasure*; no man can tell how far, and whither they may wander; and into what desperate errors and mistakes they may plunge, and out of which it will be no easy matter to recover themselves; as the experience of all ages informs us.

Now in this is founded the reasonableness and necessity of observing the *positive institutions of Christ*, as well as those *moral precepts* of the Gospel, in the obedience to which our *Unitarians* would have all religion to consist. *The light of nature* hath directed mankind, and informed them of certain duties which are of *universal, necessary and indispensable obligation*. But besides these, *revelation* hath discovered, and superadded some new ones, to the observance of which (since we are assured that they are the results of the divine will and pleasure) we should in all reason, and in all good Conscience (if we make any Conscience of the service of God) think our selves strictly obliged. And therefore they who place all Religion, as we intimated before, in the practice of the *moral and natural*, and neglect the *positive duties of Religion*, instead of bringing *glory to God*, which is as we said, the great design of Religion, they *really dishonor him*, by despising and affronting his authority, and therefore may justly expect to find the effects of his displeasure for so doing.

We see how God of old guarded his own institutions (his positive ones I mean) with very *severe sanctions*, which were as *severely executed*, upon such who presumed to violate them. Witness the punishment that overtook *Adam*, and which still pursues all his posterity for his disobedience to *one positive precept given him in Paradise*. And in the *Jewish Oeconomy*, we find the violations of the Law, even in some small and inconsiderable instances, as we may imagin, were punished with unrelenting rigor. As in the case of the man *who gathered a few sticks on the*
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the Sabbath day; who, for so doing was by the particular command of God, stoned to death, Numb. 15. 35. And Nadab and Abihu, only for offering strange fire, i. e. such as was not taken from the Altar, were themselves consumed by fire from Heaven, Lev. 10. 2. To omit other instances.

By which it appears, *how jealous God is of his honor, how tender of his authority, whatever slight apprehensions we may have of them.* And if this were duely thought on and weighed as it ought, it would be a good means to stop the mouths, and silence the cavils of those gainsayers, who in former and later times, with most detestable pride and presumption, have arraigned the wisdom of God, have censured and condemned his proceedings with men in relation to his *positive Laws and Institutions.* For did they but seriously consider the *supereminent and incomprehensible greatness of God, and their own despicable meanness,* and thereupon reflect upon the infinite distance between both, sure they durst not propose so many bold and impious questions, *relating to his dispensations with men,* as have sometimes dropped from the mouths and pens of these impertinent and profane Scoffers,

They ought to believe, that all his actions and dispensations are conducted by *an infinite and unerring wisdom,* tho he doth not always think fit to acquaint us with the *ends and reasons* of them. And as they ought to *admire his wisdom,* so ought they likewise to have a *due regard to his authority;* which is seen in all his commands, all his orders and appointments. Of which when we are once assured that they have him for their author, *nobis solum obsequii gloria relicta est,* we have nothing to do but to shew our subjection by a dutiful compliance. For tho the *particular matter* to which our obedience is required should be really small and inconsiderable; yet *the authority of God* is no such *despicable thing,* nor consequently is the obedience which we are to pay to it an *indifferent matter:* As God by many and terrible examples hath declared, especially in his dealings with the *Jews,* threatening *death and excision* to the violaters even of the ritual and Ceremonial part of his Religion. And the like consideration ought to extend it self

to the *institutions of the Gospel*, such as are the *Ministry, Sacraments, Church Assemblies, and Discipline, the observation of the Lords day &c.* All which ought to be regarded by us with that respect and reverence, which is due to the authority of him, from whom they had their Original.

It is not enough therefore for any man to say that he will serve God, but it shall be *in his own way*. That he is content indeed to pray to God, and praise him; but he will take his own time, and make use of his own methods, and in short in all the acts of religion he will govern himself by his own *humor or judgment* call it which you will. No, say I, if he will serve God, he must do it in *Gods way*, if he expects that that service should be acceptable to him. It is true if a man hath no *other light* to conduct him but his *own reason*, he must follow that and be governed by it. But on the other hand he who hath a better and brighter light afforded him, to wit, that of *prophecy and revelation*, must give himself up to the guidance and direction of it: and this he is obliged to do, both in point of gratitude and prudence. otherwise if any man shall pretend to follow the *dictates of his fancy or his reason*, in opposition to the *mind and pleasure of God* discovered and revealed to him: all that service which proceeds from thence, tho' it may carry the appearance of piety and probity and I know not what, yet will really be no better than a sort of *will-worship*, and such obedience will be no *reasonable service*, whatever other appearance of sobriety and wisdom it may carry along with it.

For is it not highly reasonable to allow, that he who is the Author and fountain of all graces and blessings should make choice of *his own way* of dispensing them? If therefore he hath appointed the *preaching of the word and administration of the Sacraments* to be the way and means of conveying grace: ought we then to attend those ordinances to which the grace and blessing is annexed? And tho as the case stands we are able to give a good account of the end and reasons of these institutions: yet if we knew of no other than the bare command of God, that of it self should be a sufficient reason to engage our compliance. He can accomplish the *greatest things*

things by the most *unlikely means*, and oftentimes makes choice of such, to manifest his *own power and wisdom* thereby: that he may have all the glory, to whom of right it belongs; and that we may be taught to live in an absolute submission to, and an entire dependance upon him.

As to some particular circumstances relating to the administration of these holy offices, my present design doth not lead me to speak any thing of them: my business being principally with such who reject, or undervalue all established *order, ministry, institutions*, and make it their employment to bring the priesthood together with all those other offices which belong to that holy function into contempt; chiefly influenced hereto by that pernicious principle, that all Religion consists only in the *practice of virtue and morality*; which is a prevailing notion among too many, and the great occasion of so many disorders in the lives of men, which at this day are too visible, and by which at long run, all Religion, even natural, may be in danger of being overturned, and all morality extinguished likewise into the bargain; notwithstanding the professions and pretences that may be made to advance it.

6ly. That God hath not only informed us of the *material* but likewise of the *formal parts* of our duty; that is, not only of the *substance*, but likewise of those *principles and motives* which must be the main springs of our actions; and likewise of the *end* to which they are to be directed. And these are as necessary to be regarded as the former; because if we should practise the duty as to the matter of it, and yet omit the right manner of the performance, such actions tho' they might be esteemed moral virtues, yet would not be acts of Religion. For every action of Religion must be done with respect to Gods authority, and must be directed to his glory. This is essential to the notion of Religion.

Hitherto I have proceeded by such steps, in which we may reasonably expect the concurrence of all who own a revealed Religion. But I must rise one degree higher, and therefore must affirm in the 7th place that as some of the duties of the Christian Religion indispensably required of us, even as to
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the substance and matter of them cannot be performed without the knowledge of the doctrines of it: (such as are the invocation and worship of Christ, either as to the *internal acts* of hope, love, dependance, submission to him, or as to the *external expressions* of those acts by prayer, praise, &c. all which do necessarily suppose his Divinity, as was said and proved before, and need not to be repeated again) so none of them can be practised in a *right manner* without the like knowledge of the abovenamed doctrines and mysteries; *the belief* of which is absolutely necessary to influence a Christians life and practice. And this will appear from a consideration of those circumstances which are requisite to *constitute and specify* the acts of Religion, so as to make them truly *Christian duties*.

For 1st. as to the *efficient cause*, they must proceed from a higher principle than *bare nature and reason*, to wit, from the *grace of God*, and the operations of his blessed Spirit; without whose assistance we cannot perform any *saving good*. The reason of this is plain, because our natures in themselves are corrupted, and *all* our faculties depraved: so that no good thing, I mean that is perfectly so, can proceed from them, till they are sanctified and renewed: *for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* In short whatever actions do not flow from a love of God, a reverential deference to his authority, a firm lively faith and reliance upon his wisdom, power, and goodness: however good and laudable they may otherwise as to the substance and matter of them be, they cannot be pleasing to God, nor will be accepted of, or rewarded by him. For *without faith*, and the like we may say of the love, and fear of God, *it is impossible to please him*.

Now these and all other the like divine dispositions, being above the power of nature, (and therefore by the Christian Church have always been accounted *supernatural*, not only with respect to *the end* to which they are ordained and directed, but likewise with respect to *the principle* from whence they proceed) must be implanted in us by the *Spirit of God*, who is the fountain of all holyness: and without whose special aid we cannot perform any such good, as I said before, as will entitle

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us to the favor of God and eternal life. For *whatever is born of the flesh is flesh*, 3. Jo. 6. what hath no higher principle than bare nature, tho' never so much exalted by the improvements of reason and philosophy, is but *natural*; but *what is born of the spirit is spirit*. A divine seed there must be before we can be *born of God*, and none that is not thus *born of water and the spirit of God, can enter into the Kingdom of God*. In a word, *they who are led by the spirit of God, they only are the sons of God*, 8. Rom. 14. And *they who have not the spirit of Christ, are none of his*, 9. v.

Now this circumstance of Christian duty, and without which it cannot be *Christian*, doth necessarily suppose the belief and acknowledgment of this important article concerning the nature and office of the third person in the blessed Trinity, whose grace and blessing we are taught to implore in all the actions of Religion: and without which, whatever other appearances of piety those actions may carry with them, they will not be available to purchase for us eternal life, as we said before.

I know the case of some *virtuous Heathens* and others, will be brought in opposition to what is thus said, who tho' they had no knowledge of this holy spirit, yet were renowned for their probity, justice, and other virtues, which did adorn their natures, and shine forth in their conversations. But yet for all this we must say, that in all their most celebrated actions, there were certain not only *gradual*, but *essential defects*; and particularly they were deficient in the *cause and principle* from whence they did proceed; as not flowing from that perfect love and that *faith without which it is impossible to please God*. For which reason their brightest virtues, and the actions which flowed from them were by St. *Austin* stiled *splendida peccata*: which tho' by many hath been judged too harsh and uncharitable an expression: yet upon due enquiry it will be found such as may be justified both from scripture and reason.

For, since *bonum est ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu*; there being in all the most laudable actions of such infidels as we are now speaking of, a deficiency as to the principle from whence they flow: they cannot therefore but be destitute of that

that *essential perfection*, which is necessary to render them acceptable to God. They do not proceed from *that faith*, which alone can enable us to overcome the world. And this is fully acknowledged by *Episcopus* himself: who tho otherwise he had as little favor for the doctrines of St. *Austin* as most men, and as favorable an opinion of the virtuous Heathens as their case would bear; yet by the plain declarations of Scripture, and the evidence of truth arising from thence, he was forced to acknowledge as much in this case as St. *Austin*. or any of the *other Fathers* did who were concerned in opposing and condemning the errors of *Pelagius*; among which the principal was, that men by the strength of nature could perform *bonum salutare*, that which is a saving good, *without the assistance of the spirit of God*: which together with the other opinions of *Pelagius* have been picked up by *Socinus* and incorporated into his divinity.

I Quis est qui vincit mundum, nisi qui credit Jesum esse Christum? quasi dicat Apostolus: circumspicite & lustrate universum mundum, & ostendite mihi vel unum de quo vere affirmari possit, quod mundum vincat vel vicerit qui Christianus & fide hac præditus non sit. Nusquam reperietis alios, quam Christianos & fideles, qui de mundo vel rebus mundanis triumphent. Soli hi unius fidei beneficio victores evadunt, & evaserunt hactenus. Reliqui omnes mundi hujus illecebris voluti torrente quodam vel abripiuntur vel obruuntur. Et utut aliquando præstare se aliis mortalibus castigatione quodam vita genere videantur, & nonnumquam etiam præsent, tamen interim semper manent mundani, & ultra terrenas cogitationes non adurgunt. Ex quo colligitur, ineptos admodum esse eos, qui adfirmare non dubitant, fieri posse, & non raro factum esse, ut Gentiles expertes promissionum fœderis, solius legis naturalis beneficio, absque ulla Christi & Evangelii illius notitia, non minus sancte pieque vixerint, quam Christiani vixerunt. Et horsum varia exempla profuerunt eorum, qui & sanctissima bene vivendi præcepta sibi aliisque dederunt, & juxta ea etiam se suaque composuisse leguntur: quæ propterea eoque etiam extollunt ut non dubitent eos in catalogo sanctorum beatorumque reponere & collocare: magno profecto cum præjudicio religionis Christianæ & fidei, cui soli eam vim, id est victoriam adsignat hoc loco atque aliis infinitis sanctus Dei Spiritus qui optime de rerum virtutibus & personarum actionibus judicare potest. Nostrium est calculum divinum potius sequi, quam ex proprio ingenio de illa re quicquam statuere. Esset enim lubens fateri, non contemnenda, imo stupenda quædam virtutis opera à Gentilibus præstita esse, taliaque cum quibus Christianorum multorum vita conferenda neutiquam est; tamen ea talia fuisse ut victores mundi propterea dici potuerint, persuadere mihi non possum. Mundani enim, id est, mundani alicujus boni amore, vel spe vel sensu, vel imaginatione motos illos fuisse necesse est, quamdiu melioris, id est, cælestis boni notitia, quæ per solum f. Christi Evangelium obtinetur, destituti fuerunt. Episcop. Lect. sacr. in primam Epist. Joh. v. 15.

But

But whatsoever may be the case of those *virtuous Heathens*, and others, who have no knowledge of the spirit of God: and whatever allowances the God of all compassion may make them, *besides and beyond any promise or covenant*, (of which we have no information in the Scriptures, and therefore to the *extraordinary and uncovenanted mercy* of him we must leave them, whose goodness is beyond our conceptions and over all his works;) yet I know no excuse can be framed for those who after plain and clear information, are so far from making their addresses to God for assistance, that they only fall down before that Divinity which is in them, their *reason* forsooth; to whom all their applications are made. This is the *light that enlightens*, this the *spirit that animates them*. But as for any grace or help from above, this they neither want, nor are concerned for.

The Apostle tells us as we heard before, *that as many as are led by the spirit of God, they only are the Sons of God*. But that this spirit, should *direct, counsel, govern* such who are so far from imploring his aid, (which yet is the necessary condition of obtaining it, as our Savior hath assured us) that they reject and deride it; cannot reasonably be imagined. I wish things may be found otherwise in the conclusion, and that this *blessed spirit* may by his mighty power sanctify and save these men, if it be possible, whether they will or no. But I am sure they have great reason to think themselves in extream danger; and to suspect that piety and probity for which they have been so much celebrated and admired. For if it do not proceed from the *true cause*, it will be deficient in one of those circumstances which are necessary to render it acceptable to God. For in short; *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, 8. Rom. 9. and

1 See the *discourse concerning human reason*, before cited, together with that called the *Trinitarian scheme of religion, with the notes upon it*: where the Author, with his usual buffoonry endeavors to expose the Catholick doctrine concerning the impotence of mans nature (in this degenerate state) to perform any saving good, without the help and assistance of Gods grace. This he represents as an impious, and withall as a foolish, absurd, ridiculous opinion. And upon the head concerning the *Sacraments*, he not only denies that grace, which all good Christians say is annexed to the due use of them, but in a blasphemous manner he accounts it no better than charm and incantation. p. 23. 24.

whether they can be *led by that spirit*, who blaspheme his person, and not only refuse his assistance, but scoff at, ridicule and deride it, will become them seriously and timely to consider.

A second circumstance requisite to constitute an action of religion a Christian duty, *is the end* to which it is to be referred, which is now not only the glory of God in general; but the glory of *the blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. For it is not the *Godhead* barely considered in it self, or as residing in one single person, but as subsisting in the before-mentioned *three glorious persons*, which to us Christians is the true object of Religious adoration and worship. By the profession and faith of *this Trinity* are we admitted members of Christs Church; to their service are we solemnly devoted by baptism, and to their honor all our actions should be referred; otherwise they are not actions of *Christian duty*, nor consequently will they be accepted of or rewarded as such. *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father*, let his pretensions be what they will, Jo. 5. 23. nay all men are *to honor the Son even as they honor the Father*, with the *same religious worship*; which yet they cannot, they must not exhibit to him, if he be *not God* as well as *man*. Otherwise that worship would be *plain Idolatry*, as we have shewn before, so that the belief of the *holy Trinity*, is absolutely necessary to influence a Christians practice.

Lastly *the manner* after which our duties are to be performed, requires the like knowledge and belief. For they are all to have a necessary relation to *the mediation* of our Savior, which is the great and fundamental principle of a Christian life and practice. It is not enough for us to offer up our praises to God for the works of *creation and providence*, but we must do it chiefly for that stupendous contrivance of his wisdom, in the *redemption and salvation of mankind*. It is not enough to cast our selves at the feet of our offended Creator, and to implore his mercy for the pardon of our sins; but we must beg it *in the name* and by *the mediation* of his Son. It is not enough to forgive our enemies, but we must do it chiefly for this reason, *that God for Christs sake hath forgiven us*. We must be chaste and

and temperate; but the motives to these duties must not be taken either solely or chiefly from the consideration of our neighbors or our selves; but from the remembrance *that we are bought with a price: that we are not our own, and therefore should glorify God with our bodies and spirits which are his.*

In short all our duties must be performed by the assistance of his spirit, all our services sanctified by his grace, and the defects of them pardoned by his merits. Our garments must be washed in his blood; our prayers and praises must be perfumed by his incense, being then only gratefull to his father, when presented to him, by the gracious and powerful intercession of his Son. In one word, even *charity which is the fulfilling of the Law*, and to which the Apostle gives the preference above faith, must yet be influenced by it, otherwise we cannot rightly love God, nor expect to be beloved by him. For the great motive to our love of God, must be that amazing instance of his love *in sending his Son into the world*, first to instruct us in our duty, and then to die for us.

How his Son? Was he only *an adopted Son*, a good man, who was honoured with that style; because he was *sanctified and sent into the world*, in order to discover the will of God to mankind; and afterwards laid down his life in confirmation of the truth of what he so delivered? What was there so great, so strange, so unusual in this that heaven and earth should stand astonished at it; that the Angels should *stoop down* and pry and peep into this mystery? Surely there must be something more in this affair, or else the whole world could not be filled with wonder and amazement at it. Indeed there was somewhat extraordinary: for *God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son*, (a title never assumed, never given to any the most glorious creature) into it, *that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* This consideration surely must be able to work upon our affections, and if that cannot, it must be absolutely impossible that any other motive or argument should prevail.

By all which we see, that all the actions of a true Christian life must be influenced by, and one way or other have

relation to *the mediation of our Savior*; and this mediation must receive its virtue and efficacy *from the divinity of his person*, without which he could never have performed the functions and operations which belong to that high office, as hath been shewn at large in the foregoing papers.

So that indeed, the belief of this single article concerning *the Divinity of our Savior*, is so far from being an indifferent matter, as some would persuade us, that it is absolutely necessary to the very *Being and Essence of the Christian Religion*: and the denial of it consequently must unavoidably occasion a fundamental change in the whole frame and constitution of it. So that a Religion with this doctrine, and another without it, are two Religions of *a different species*, between which there must be a vast and an irreconcilable disagreement: forasmuch as they cannot agree either in proposing the same *articles to be believed*, or recommending the same *duties to be practised* by their respective professors.

For let the divinity of Christ be discarded, then you must be content to part with all the other doctrines concerning the *Trinity, Incarnation, Redemption* of the world by the merits and satisfaction of our Savior. The like change will attend the doctrines concerning the Ministry and the Sacraments, both as to their *nature, use, and efficacy*. The whole covenant of *grace* will hereby be entirely changed: because there cannot be either the same *promises on one hand*, or the same *conditions* to be performed on the other, as are now supposed. And thus the alteration of the faith will necessarily be attended with an alteration in the practice of Christians. Our prayers and praises must be different: we cannot have the *same faith*, nor the *same hope*, nor exercise the *same charity*. For these duties, (and the like must be affirmed of all other graces,) in them that believe, and in those who deny the divinity of our Savior must flow from different principles, must be influenced by different motives, and must be directed to different ends, and consequently occasion an essential change in those duties. In short upon the belief and profession of this doctrine *Christ hath built his Church*: and upon the same foundation we must build our *comforts and our hopes*, and there we shall find a sure bottom for them to rest

rest on, *against which the powers of hell shall not be able to prevail.* And from this confidence nothing I hope shall be able to withdraw us.

And thus I have shewn how this opinion which denies the necessity of faith, plainly subverts the Christian Religion both as to *doctrine and practice*: which is the second pernicious consequence that flows from it.

The third and last evil consequence that attends this position is, that it is *highly dishonourable to the holy Scriptures*, and tends *directly* to weaken that esteem and reverence which we should have for them. For as I observed in the beginning of this discourse, *faith* can for no other reason be thought unnecessary, but because *the objects* about which it is conversant are of no great importance. If the doctrines revealed in Scripture be such as that the *glory of God*, and the *salvation of mens souls* are concerned in them, then it is certain the knowledge of them cannot be judged an indifferent matter. But if it be said that those truths contained there are of that nature, as that the honor of God, and our own safety do not depend upon them; then the question that must arise hence will be, to what purpose were they discovered? and why do the Scriptures themselves lay such a stress upon that discovery, as to tell us, that they were *mysteries, great mysteries, hid from former ages*, and now revealed by the *Spirit of God*, who only could find out and fathom *these deep things*, which he hath made known to the world? nay the *Son of God who lay in the bosom of his Father*, thought it worth while to come down into the world on purpose, to discover those secrets which otherwise must for ever have lain concealed there.

And after all this, are these such trifling inconsiderable matters, that it is of no great consequence whether we know or are ignorant of them? whether we believe or whether we reject them? Can any thing be uttered that can tend more to the defamation of the *holy Scriptures*, and the *Authors and penmen* of them? For if the Socinian account of these things be true, then I say it must cast a dangerous reflexion upon the
wisdom

wisdom and integrity of those divine writers which is hereby brought under a just suspicion: in that they should in such a grave and serious manner deliver what they had to say, under the notion of *supernatural, important, sublime truths*, which when they come to be narrowly examined, are found to be of such little use and benefit to mankind. Nay the reflexion must rise higher, and be terminated on the spirit of God himself, who is said to have *assisted, directed, and inspired* them with the knowledge of those truths, which they afterwards committed to writing for the lasting benefit of the Church to all succeeding ages of the world.

Perhaps it will be said, there are some things contained in the Scriptures of great importance to the souls of men; but these are only *the precepts*, and those *promises* by which we are encouraged to yield obedience to them. But for the rest, they are useless, or at best indifferent matters, which we may either know or be ignorant of, without running any hazard thereby. I answer, since the precepts and promises make up but a part of the writings, particularly of the new Testament which we are now chiefly speaking of, the other which is the greatest part of them must still lie under the beforementioned reflexion, which cannot be wiped off by this answer.

First, for the Gospels, we know they are in great measure made up of the account which is there given of the birth, life, actions, miracles, passion, death, resurrection, ascension of our Savior; all which were carefully recorded by the Evangelists, with this design that we might be informed of them, and thereby be induced to believe that he was the Son of God, and that by believing we might have life thro his name. And the Apostles in their preaching when they were sent abroad to teach and instruct all nations, were earnest in declaring and inculcating the main points of the Christian history as well as doctrine, opening and alledging out of the Scriptures, not only that Christ was the Son of God, but also that he was to suffer and rise again from the dead, and then to enter into his glory. This was the Gospel that St. Paul preached, which his hearers received,

ceived, wherein they stood, and by which they were to be saved, 1. Cor. 15. 2. 3.

And 2dly, if besides the *history* we consider the *doctrine* which is recorded in the Gospel, (if we may be allowed thus to distinguish them, for to us now the historical parts of our Saviors life and death &c. are become doctrinal points and articles of faith) we shall find that it consists not only of commands and precepts recommended to our practice; but likewise of certain truths of which it gives us information, and proposes them to our knowledge and belief. *St. John's Gospel* as we have heard was written on purpose to inform us of the *divine nature and Godhead* of our Savior. And our Savior himself, besides the instructions which he gives his hearers, for the regulating and government of their life and actions, is copious in giving an account of himself as to his *nature, descent, and original*; that he was the *Son of God*, that he came down from heaven; and of the errand upon which he came into the world, which was to purchase pardon and remission of sins for men, by laying down his life, and shedding his blood for their sakes, &c.

Then for the *Epistles*; whether those that are styled *general*, or those wrote upon more *particular occasions*, as directed to certain persons or churches; but which as to their use are likewise general, and designed for the lasting benefit of the Church to all succeeding ages: I say in these we find the Apostles frequently and earnestly inculcating and recommending the *doctrine* as well as *practice* of Christianity: their business was to make their disciples and converts, not only *good men*, but likewise *sound believers*. To confirm and settle them in the *faith*, to guard them against those errors and heresies, which very early began to corrupt the purity of the Christian doctrine: by reason of which errors, and of that degeneracy of manners, and impurity of life, which is first or last the constant and inevitable consequence of such errors, (I mean which strike at the foundations of Religion) *the way of truth was evil spoken of*. To mention all particulars would be in a manner to transcribe the *Epistles*. I shall therefore content my self with what may be found in the directions given by *St. Paul* to *Timothy*, and

and *Titus*, the Bishops and Metropolitans of *Ephesus* and *Crete*.

In these we find our Apostle had a particular and especial regard to the *faith and doctrine* as well as *precepts and practise* of the Christian Religion. He requires *Timothy* to be an example to believers in word as well as conversation, in faith as well as purity, 1. *Ep. Tim.* 4. chap. 12. In order to his being a good minister of *Jesus Christ*, it was requisite that he should be nourished in the words of faith and of good doctrine, v. v. That he should give attendance to doctrine, 13. v. and to that gift which was in him, 14. viz. his high function and office, together with those gifts of knowledge and wisdom in the mysteries of his holy Religion, whereby he was enabled to discharge it. He was to take heed to himself, and particularly to his doctrine, for in so doing he should both save himself and them that heard him 16. v.

How by so doing save himself? doth the salvation of men depend upon their holding and maintaining sound doctrine? why I thought this had been a matter of speculation, and therefore that Religion was not much concerned in it: which consists wholly and solely in the practice of virtue and morality. *Socinus* indeed and his friends have told us so: but *St. Paul* we find was of another opinion. And therefore he once and again exhorts his Son *Timothy*, to hold fast the form of sound words, in faith as well as in love, 2. *Tim.* 2. 13. which latter is the effect and fruit of the former, and therefore both are to be preserved and maintained. we must hold faith and a good conscience, 1. *Tim.* 1. 19. the observation of all ages assuring us that it is seldom found; but that they who cast away one, do likewise make shipwreck of the other. And therefore a good conscience and a faith unfeigned are again joined together by the Apost. v. 5. of this ch.

The like advice is given *Titus*, that he should not only shew himself a pattern to his flock, in good works, but likewise that he should in doctrine shew uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, together with sound speech which cannot be condemned, 2. *Tit.* 7. 8. v. And in the qualifications of a Bishop mentioned in the 1. ch. it is required not only that he should be sober, just, holy, temperate &c. but likewise that he should hold fast the faithful word, that

that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince gain-sayers, ver. 8, 9.

Thus St. Paul delivers himself: but if what Socinus saith be true; we shall find that he hath taken a great deal of pains to no purpose, and hath shewn, perhaps a well meant, but an ignorant and mistaken zeal in these his writings; and that both with relation to the sound doctrine which he upon all occasions recommends, and 2dly, the errors which are opposite to it.

1st, As to matters of faith and doctrine, it is certain our Apostle hath shewn a great concern, and hath used abundance of zeal and vehemence in recommending that which in the conclusion, if, as I said, we believe Socinus, will be found to be of very small consequence, and in which Religion is little or not at all concerned. This knowledge and perswasion of the mind may indeed make us be esteemed and magnified by men, but it will not render us acceptable to God, who puts no value upon any actions of the understanding; and is only concerned for matters of practice, and those duties of morality which make up a good life.

It is true the former without this latter will be really insignificant; but in conjunction with it, it is of necessary and indispensable obligation, in the opinion of St. Paul. I confess if this Socinian Position which we are now refuting be true, St. Paul was certainly under a mistake. He advised Timothy to take care of his doctrine and to hold fast the form of sound words, but he ought rather to have said, be an example in conversation and charity, but do not trouble thy hearers with discourses about Faith. Take heed to thy life, and then it is no matter what becomes of thy doctrine. Obedi & credidisti, true faith consists in obedience, and a good life is the end of all Religion, as hath been often said, and if that be attained, we have made sufficient provision for Gods glory and our own safety, and therefore need not disturb our selves or others about matters of truth and speculation.

All this may seem fine and plausible at first view, and may carry the appearance of truth to men of shallow understandings, or to others who tho they are not of such weak minds, yet for some reasons may be willing enough to be deceived, but can never prevail with any who are througly conversant in the

Holy Scriptures, and have any true sense of the Christian Religion as it is laid down and described there. What man is there who hath any right taste and relish of those *weighty, solid, substantial truths* which the sacred writings recommends to us, who can be content to exchange them for those *thin, airy superficial discourses of morality* which are to be found in the writings of our Adversaries.

It is true these latter, (as we have allways said, and must continue still to say, upon this and the like occasions) I mean exhortations and precepts to *virtue and morality*, ought to be attended to with a particular regard. They are *incorporated* into our Holy Religion, and make up a *principal part* of it, and without them all other pretences to Religion, are *hypocritical and vain*. But yet this must not be construed to the prejudice of that other part of Religion which consists in the knowledge and belief of those supernatural truths revealed in the Scriptures, *which are worthy of all acceptance*: and therefore should be received by us with all thankfulness, and entertained with all reverence, attention and esteem. Particularly St. Paul in his writings is still entertaining his readers with discourses about the faith, and with high elogies and commendations of it, chiefly upon this score, that the objects and articles of it are *Mysteries*, above the reach and comprehension of reason, as hath formerly been observed.

What doth this *Mysteriophilus* mean, may some of our Adversaries say, thus to trouble and perplex our understandings with such sublime and incomprehensible matters? Wherever we look into his Epistles we still meet with Mysteries and Revelations, and are perpetually pursued and haunted as it were by them at every turn. It is true, the *writings of St. Paul* are full of such sublime truths and doctrines, and except we are resolved to lay these writings quite aside, those *mysterious truths* like so many *phantomes* will still be presenting themselves to our view, notwithstanding the attempts which some men have made, *by reason and sound sense*, as they call it, to *chase them away from their habitations*. But notwithstanding all their endeavors, and the success that either hath, or may attend such attempts, yet they

they will never totally prevail, as long as we can preserve our *Bibles*: our *Bibles* I say, which we still appeal to, and by which we are content all matters in dispute between us should be determined. For let them chase these truths where they please, and let them with never so much scorn and disdain discard them out of their new *Schemes and Systems of Divinity*; yet they can never drive them out of the *Scriptures*, nor particularly the *writings of St. Paul*, and there we shall be sure to find them.

But some men tho they are content to be accounted *Christians*, yet perhaps are not willing to be esteemed *Paulists*. And I cannot wonder at this averlation: for light and darkness cannot be more opposite, than the writings of that great Apostle, and those of their master *Socinus*: what one esteemes, the other undervalues; what the one thinks fit to be received with reverence, the other rejects with scorn. Witness that solemn asseveration, and that unusual preface of respect with which the Apostle mentions the truths of the Gospel, *without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh, &c.* Why should the Apostle ulther in what he had to say with so much *pomp and solemnity*, except he had judged these things to be matters of great and high importance? But what he thought so great a commendation, in the judgment of some others is accounted the greatest disparagement that can be to any doctrine; which for that reason, *viz.* for which it is adjudged worthy of admiration by *St. Paul* is slighted and despised by the Disciples of *Socinus*. But the notions of these two persons are quite different, both as to *doctrines*, as we have already heard; and also in the second place, as to *those errors* which are opposite to them.

It is plain *St. Paul* did not think so slightly of them as some men now do. Witness his Epistle to the *Galatians*, and those sharp expressions which are to be found there against the *Judaizing Christians*, who were for joining the observance of the *Ceremonial Law* with the *faith of Christ*. Tho this opinion was not inconsistent with morality, nor did it hinder them from believing that one only fundamental Article of the Christian Religion, as some account it, that *Jesus was the Messiah*;

yet for all this he upbraids them with folly and stupidity, fascination and madness; charges them with the guilt of subverting the Christian Religion, by these impure mixtures; censures them with an *Anathema*, tells them roundly that they deserved to be separated for ever from the presence and favor of Christ, who denyed the virtue and efficacy of his sufferings, and expected to be justified by any other means or methods, as I observed before.

In his Epistles to *Tim.* and *Titus* he shews the same dislike of erroneous doctrines in Religion. And tho the men who owned and propagated these errors, did not want some specious and plausible pretences wherewith to justify themselves; and particularly did pretend *reason* and *demonstration* against the *mysteries of faith* as some now do: yet for all this the Apostle doth not forbear to call such *irreligious oppositions*, by the name of *profane and vain babblings*, and lets us know that tho such persons thereby made an ostentation of *science*, yet it was *falsely so called*, which some professing have erred concerning the *Faith* (which cannot be much wondred at; the same fate still attending all such who oppose reason to revelation) that is, fell into sundry pernicious errors destructive of the faith, 1 *Tim.* 6. 20, 21. How, have erred concerning the *Faith* may some say, what tho they did, is there any such great harm in so doing? Yes there is great mischief that doth attend these errors, if we believe the Apostle, who therefore accounts them no better than so many loathsome infectious diseases, which upon that score, viz. of their danger and contagion, he compares to a *Gangrene*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17. which putrifies and pollutes every thing that comes within its reach: intimating thereby that those errors by their venome and malignity did defile, and corrupt the true Religion, eating as it were into the very vitals of it, which must thereby in time be wasted and consumed.

1 Τῶν ἁνυπόστατων καὶ ἄχρηστων λόγων, ὅνους οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὰς ψυχὰς ἐκτρέφουσιν ἐν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ καὶ ἀπειθείᾳ. Οὐκ οὐκ. in 1 *Tim.* 6. 20. Ἀντιστὰς τῇ γνώσει, Ὀπποσitiones scientiæ, sunt axiomata, argumenta, objectiones contra fidei doctrinam, quas adferunt specioso scientiæ titulo. Sic Men. *Tirin. Ell. &c. apud Polium.*

The Authors and promoters of these false doctrines he styles *seducers, deceivers, unruly and vain talkers, who subvert whole Houses; whose mouths, he saith, ought to be stopped, and they themselves severely rebuked, that they may be found in the faith.* What is the matter may some say; what have these men done to deserve these hard words, and this severe treatment? Some of them it is true did deny the Resurrection of the Body, and said it was *past already*: but what then? they still held the necessity of a Resurrection from sin, the belief of which may be adjudged much more necessary and of greater consequence, than of that of the Body; because the great end of Religion, viz. Piety and a good life, is sufficiently secured by the belief of this spiritual resurrection to holiness; whilst that other of the body, hath been scrupled and rejected by men of sense and probity; such as are Socinians and Quakers; which latter have revived the very same opinion which the Apostle here condemns in Hymeneus and Philetus; acknowledging no resurrection but that from sin, which must be begun and finished in this life. Besides, this error is consistent with the belief of that Capital Article that *Jesus is the Messiah*, and if so, instead of the bestowing upon them those hard words of *deceivers and seducers*, we ought to own them *pro veris in Christo fratribus*, as we heard before.

But yet for all this they, and others of the like sort, are by our Apostle accounted *proud, vain, conceited men, boasters and babblers, persons of corrupt minds, subverters of the faith: grievous wolves who would not spare the flock; whom every body therefore should avoid, as they would provide for their own safety.* And therefore in his Ep. to Titus¹ he tells us, that such persons though at first they ought to be treated with admonitions, advice and perswasions,

¹ Factam esse resurrectionem dicunt in quotidiana animorum renovatione ac regeneratione à morte peccati ad vitam justitiæ, ad quam resurrectionem ipse Apostolus passim fideles hortatur. Refert Tertull. nec suo tempore desuisse qui resurrectionem mortuorum in imaginariam resurrectionem disorquerent, dicentes homines exinde resurrectionem consecutos cum Domino esse, cum baptisma induerint. Tales Hereticos sua etiam aetate extitisse testatur Thom. Aquinas. Ad hanc igitur Allegoricam resurrectionem revocasse videntur Hymeneus & Philetus intentionem fidelium, ut quodam prætextu pietatis à fide veræ resurrectionis eos alienarent. Est. Comment. in Epist. 2. ad Timoth. c. 2. v. 18. 2 cap. 3. v. 10

in order to reclaim them from their errors; yet if after sufficient warning, and admonition they will not repent, and lay aside their impious opinions, then *they ought to be rejected*, we ought to turn from such, and to converse no otherwise with them than we would with an Infidel or profane person.

How may some say, what will you reject, and repell from your Communion those whom Christ will receive into his armes, nay, *quos celo, & solio suo dignabitur*, whom he will admit into Heaven and place with him upon his Throne? will you condemn those whom their Savior will absolve; and such are all *Hereticks* in the opinion of *Episcopus*, let their errors be what they will, *in quocunque dogmate sit error & dissensio*, if they are otherwise men of probity and live as some call it, a good life?

Yes such, even these high pretenders to virtue and righteousness, if after reproof, advice and other means of conviction; they will not be perswaded, and reclaimed; nay if instead of being wrought upon, they become hardned in their errors; like so many wild Asses lifting up their heels, kicking at instructions, and spurning away all the good advice that is given them: or like so many *unruly swine*, *trampling these admonitions under their feet*, nay turning about and rending those who cast these pearls before them: and in a word, if instead of submitting to the truth, they betake themselves to contradicting and blaspheming, railing at the persons, and reproaching the office of Christs Ministers, rending and tearing in pieces, as far as in them lies, their reputations, and exposing both them and their holy Function, under the notion of *Priestcraft*, to the scorn and derision of Libertines and Atheists; I say when they proceed thus far: then in compliance with the advice, and in imitation of the practice of

† Hæreticum post unam & alteram admonitionem devota, & *post Admonitionem, quæ leniter fit, docendo & monendo ut resipiscat: vel Correctionem, Redargutionem, ab Episcopo scil. faciendam cum autoritate & potestate, qua etiam excommunicationem illi minetur nisi resipiscat. Hanc adhiberi vult (Apost.) tum ut via prius tentetur qua resitui possit: tum quia aliqui constare non poterat quod esset Hæreticus, id est, in errore pertinax. Talem devota, non amplius admitte ad colloquium, notam illi inure ut homini qui Censuræ Ecclesiæ subiacet, & jube omnes familiare ejus consortium fugere. Sic Eustius, Calv. Hamm. aliique hunc locum explicant.*

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the Apostle, we ought to avoid and reject such, to withdraw our selves from them, to note and mark them, to have no company nor fellowship with them: not to receive them into our Houses, and much less to admit them into the House of God; but to drive them thence by spiritual Censures and Excommunications; tho' still with a merciful intention, to bring them hereby to repentance, and that they may learn not to Blaspheme.

This I doubt not will be thought strange advice by some, as being quite contrary to the meekness and gentleness of Socinus; and to that tenderness and compassion which is in a particular manner due to Hereticks, and which he and his followers have so often recommended to the world. To which I have this to reply, 1st, That Socinus, (and the like may be affirmed of many of his friends) notwithstanding the great pretences made by him to more than ordinary meekness, charity, and condescension; yet was a person of like passions with other men; tho' he had a particular, and more than ordinary command of them, which must be acknowledged to be no small point of wisdom. But for all this, being a person of quick and keen resentments, he found his passions oftentimes too headstrong to be governed, which would and did, upon some occasions break through all the restraints which his skill, art and cunning could lay upon them; as might easily be made out by many instances, if it were the business of this discourse to produce them.

But 2^{dly}, This moderation and gentleness, tho' never so excellent and commendable, yet may (as some other excellent things too often are, the more is the pity) be abused to very evil purposes. We know in the Apostles days there were not wanting such who made use of their liberty, as a cloak for their maliciousness, and turned the grace of God into wantonness. And it is no wonder that the like abuse should overtake this meekness, charity, and moderation, which we must own to be necessary and essential ingredients of a true Christian temper, and without which no man can be a sincere Disciple of Christ. But yet for as much as they are capable of being abused, and that crafty and designing men may, and often have made use of them, to cover, and thereby the more securely to compass some unlawful projects:

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we must say that the use and exercise of them is to be regulated by *certain restrictions and qualifications*, without which these excellent and divine virtues, will be so far from being serviceable to the interests of Religion, that on the other hand they will, or rather some men under the pretence, and by the professions of them, may do a great deal of mischief in the world.

I am sensible I am now entering upon a subject, which might afford matter for a large discourse, and perhaps might not be unworthy of it, but I can at present speak but very briefly of the matter, and what I have to say, that I may not digress from my Subject, shall be reduced to these two Heads.

1st, That whatever tenderness and compassion we may have for *persons* overtaken with errors, yet we ought to have no such tender regard for *these errors themselves*, I mean which overthrow the frame, and tear up even the foundations of our Religion, such as are the *Socinian* tenets, which oppose the doctrines concerning the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, and *satisfaction of Christ*; these being necessary and essential parts of our Religion, without which it will not only be *imperfect*, but indeed *none at all*. Here we must upon all occasions, (and such occasions do but too often offer themselves to us in the age we live in) shew not only our *soundness* in the Faith, but our *zeal* for it; and *contend earnestly* for those doctrines, and that *form of sound words which was once delivered to the Saints*. Here is no room for treaties, and accommodations, and projects of reconciliation: we may as soon reconcile *Christ and Belial*, as make any agreement between these *fundamental truths*, and those *capital Errors*, which are directly opposite to, and totally destructive of them. And therefore if any are so far transported with the love of *moderation*, as that they will extend it indifferently to all parts of the Christian doctrine, and those dangerous errors which plainly overthrow them: then I say, we may without breach of charity venture to affirm, that such persons, how much soever they may be otherwise celebrated for their abilities, parts, temper, virtue, &c. either have not such *right notions* of the Christian Religion,

Religion, or so *just concern* for it as becomes them ; and therefore they thereby bring either their *wisdom* or *integrity* under a just suspicion ; but I shall say no more of this matter at present.

2dly, The best way of shewing our charity and compassion to such persons, is by plainly and fairly laying before them their guilt and danger, their danger I say, while they continue under these fatal mistakes ; which consists in these two things ; 1st, That as the case stands, they can have *no excuse for their infidelity* ; and 2dly, they cannot have any *just and reasonable hopes of Salvation* while they continue in it ; I mean if they will be governed by the plain declarations of the mind and will of God contained in the Scriptures, and not by their own fancies and imaginations, which is too weak and unstable a foundation for any man to build his hopes of happiness upon.

First I say they can have *no excuse for their infidelity*, they cannot plead ignorance or want of information ; because these truths which we now contend for are written in such fair and legible Characters that *he who runs may read them*. And therefore there must be some *corrupt lust, passion, or interest*, lying at the bottom, which prejudices them against the truth, drawing a veil as it were before their eyes, and hindering them from seeing that, which all the world in a manner discerns beside themselves.

It must not be denied that there are some points of Religion, debated sometimes with too great heat and passion, about which men Learned and Pious may disagree ; and here there may be ground for the exercise of *charity and moderation* ; partly because they are not so *clearly revealed* in Scripture, but that there may be room left for difference and doubting about the truth of them : and partly because tho' they were clearly revealed, yet they are not of *that importance*, as that the ignorance or denial of them, can prejudice the principal and substantial parts of our Religion, which remain safe and entire notwithstanding those differences. But as for these other *fundamental truths*, no man can with any reason complain of the darkness and obscurity of Scripture about them. They are mentioned so often, and in such plain, positive express terms, that there is no place left for doubting or uncertainty.

It is true men may wilfully *shut their eyes against the light*, and then tho it shine with never so much brightness and lustre, it is no wonder that they are not illuminated by it. Otherwise, if they will but open their eies, they will find so little reason to complain for want of a *convenient light*, that in this case, they may rather fear lest they should be dazled with too *great a splendor*. It is not possible for words to express any thing more plainly and clearly than these truths are delivered in the sacred writings; and therefore if any shall pretend that they cannot find them there; they must be told, that the fault is in themselves, and the Scriptures must be acquitted from all blame. Neither will it be sufficient to excuse such persons from the guilt of their infidelity; by saying they are men of good sense and great probity, and therefore if they are under any mistakes, it must rather be their *misfortune* than their *crime*, and that this must be owing to some such innocent causes, as *will justify*, or at least *extenuate their errors*. I know such Apologies are usually made for them, but yet for all that we may venture to affirm that their ignorance and unbelief, are owing to some cause that is highly criminal, and to which they must be ascribed. For tho the persons we are speaking of may be *just, temperate, liberal, contempters of the world*; yet we may say to them as our Savior did to that virtuous young man in the Gospel; *one thing is still wanting*, and that is *humility*; humility I say, and that meekness of understanding which will dispose men to bend the whole soul and all the faculties of it to the authority of God; and that without hesitation or reluctance, notwithstanding any suggestions that *flesh and blood*, sense or reason may make to the contrary.

Perhaps it will be replied, is it not *uncharitable* to think so ill of men celebrated for their virtues, as to imagine that some *corrupt motive*, and particularly *pride*, should be the cause of their incredulity in these points we are speaking of; since in their conversation and behavior, they seem to shew all the *humility* and in their writings about Religion they pretend to all the *sincerity* in the world? I Ans. this is no groundless, nor consequently uncharitable surmize, for all this. And this I shall make appear from the words, and out of the writings of our
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saries themselves. *Socinus* of old hath often declared that the Scriptures, in the matters debated between them and us, are so plain and clear that no man, who is not plane ¹ *stupidus*, bereft in a manner of common sense can mistake their meaning; and therefore, if they do so, their mistakes must be owing to malice and impiety.

Herein you see, we both agree in assigning the true cause of mens ignorance or unbelief of these great and fundamental truths; tho' we differ vastly in the application of it; however we have gained this point, that in the opinion of *Socinus*, the real ground of mens ignorance of divine truths, is some corrupt lust or passion; and that without breach of charity, this may be charged upon them notwithstanding their pretensions to a sincere and impartial enquiry after truth. For these pretensions are made on our side as well as theirs, and yet they are not thought sufficient to acquit us from the imputations of pride, malice, and impiety, even in the judgment of this moderate man. And therefore if we affirm the same of them, we may not be accounted uncharitable, barely for this reason (provided that otherwise we have truth and reason on our sides) that they make great professions and protestations of their uprightness & sincerity in the search after truth.

Again, A late Unitarian in his Exhortation to a Free and Impartial Enquiry into the Doctrines of Religion, assures us that when the Scripture sets down any Capital doctrine, it doth it in such plain termes, ² that none can be deceived if he be sincere. And again, that the ³ doctrine of Christianity, as revealed in the Scriptures, (and especially as to what concerns that primitive and capital truth, that *Jesus* is the son of God, who is, as he styles him, his Interpreter, and *Messias*, and hath revealed the will of his Father to the world) is proposed with that clearness and evidence, and confirmed by such irrefragable proofs, viz. Miracles, &c. that with relation to this truth, men shall be accountable for the errors of their understanding, as well as for the vices of their will; because here is as much evidence as is requisite to satisfy an honest reasonable mind. ⁴ The want of Faith or

¹ See his words before cited p. 15. of this Discourse. ² p. 10. ³ p. 15.

⁴ So saith another Unitarian in his Treatise called *Some thoughts upon Dr. Sherl. Vin-
dication of the Trinity*. p. 21.

understanding in this respect, is the want of probity and uprightness, and therefore the fault is inexcusable. And yet for all this we find the *Deists*, who by the same Author are said to lead *stricter lives than most of those who boast so much of Christianity*, do not admit the truth of the Christian revelation concerning the *Messias*, but reject it as a fable and a cheat.

What shall we say to this? Are not the *Deists*, men of *probity and understanding*? yes sure, we shall do them a great deal of injury if we did not own them to be *sincere honest hearted men*, who as the same Author tells us *do good by the impulse of their natural Religion, Honesty, and a good Conscience.* What should the cause of their infidelity then be? It is not to be ascribed to want of information, for they have the Scriptures at hand, and do sometimes peruse them, as appears by what they say and write in order to *ridicule and expose them.* But how comes it to pass, that they do not receive and embrace the truths contained there? This cannot be owing to *stupidity*, because they are said to be *judicious persons*, men of good sense and understanding: and yet for all this one would think that they were not such Masters of right reason, as some pretend, since the same Author tells us, *that the primitive truths of the Gospel, which relate to our Savior, are of such evidence and certainty, that no rational man can deny them.* But if their infidelity be not owing to the *want of reason*, it must therefore be ascribed to their *want of sincerity and uprightness*, (if we believe the Author of the *Free and Impartial Enquiry* before mentioned;) notwithstanding their high pretensions to *morality, virtue, and probity*: For in the Scriptures *there is enough* saith he, *to satisfy any honest reasonable mind*, provided he brings along with him those virtuous qualities of humility, meekness and sincerity, which are absolutely requisite to dispose the minds of men for the reception of divine truths.

But when all is done, the account which this Author gives of the *Deists*, is contradictory and inconsistent with it selfe, and how we shall be able to reconcile these contradictions I cannot well tell. Sometimes they are said to be men of *judgment, honesty, and sincerity.* At other times we are told that no
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men of *common reason*, or *common honesty* can disbelieve the truths of the Gospel, which yet the *Deists* we know do, and pretend-*reason* for so doing. These differences cannot easily I think be solved, except we should say, that in civil matters the *Deists* are men of *sense and probity*, but in the affairs of Religion, they act like men, that have no regard to *honesty, conscience, or honor*. If this solution doth not please them, then I must leave it to our *Unitarians* to find out some other ways for their excuse or vindication.

Now what this Author saith of *Deists* or *Atheists*, call them which you will, that we must say, (and we may say it upon their own principles without breach of Charity) of the *Socinians*, who deny the mysteries of the Christian Religion; which are delivered in the Scriptures in such *plain clear expressions*, that no words can make them more evident; there is no deficiency in the Sacred writings, as to *perspicuity and clearness*; but there is wanting *meekness* and *humility* in them that read them: and this is the true cause of their unbelief.

And this among other things, is the reason why they who erre in those points styled fundamental, can have no reasonable hopes of Salvation, I mean while they obstinately continue in those errors; which is the second thing, as I said before, in which their danger consists: because *pride, pertinacy, and presumption*, which are at the bottome of those errors, are in themselves damnable sins, and destructive of Salvation. The Scriptures positively and peremptorily require the *persuasion of the mind*, and submission of the understanding to these great truths; and that under *the same penalties*, as they require of us obedience and submission to the moral laws and precepts of Religion. Doth the Scripture say, that *without holyness no man shall see God*? The same writings, do in as express termes say, *that he that believeth not on the son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*, Jo. 3. 36.

If you farther enquire why *unbelief* should bring men into so great danger: I answer, Besides the reason now mentioned, two others may be assigned for it. *1st*, Because it is *highly dishonorable to God*, and consequently destructive of the main
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end of Religion, which is to bring glory to him, as I have shewed before. It is a direct opposition to *the veracity of God*, for which reason the Apostle highly aggravates the guilt of it, particularly with relation to that great truth concerning the Divinity of our Savior, *viz.* that he who believeth it not *makes God a Liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his son*, 1 Jo. 5. 10. nay it is not only a denyal of the veracity of God, but is a *high disparagement to his wisdom*, and withall bids plain *defiance to his authority*; which is discovered as much in what he hath proposed to our belief as what he hath recommended to our practice. And therefore it being an instance of our submission to God, to give our assent to what he affirms, it must consequently be an high presumption, and therefore as dangerous an act of disobedience to *refuse our assent* to what he hath revealed, as not to *practise* what he hath commanded.

In short, if we will be thought truly to honor God, we must yield an entire submission to him without *exception* or *reservation*, we must make the whole Soul with all the powers and faculties of it, the *understanding* as well as the *will* and *affections* stoop and bend to him, without which we cannot practise that *self denyal*, which is the indispenfable duty of the Gospel, and without which we cannot be Christs Disciples.

But 2dly, Another reason of the danger of *Infidelity* is, because it hinders us from practising the dutys of Christianity, which are the necessary conditions of the new Covenant, : some of which as to *the substance* cannot, and none of them as to *the right manner* of performance, can be practised by us without the knowledge and belief of *certain supernatural truths* revealed in the Gospel, as we have said, and proved before, which need not be repeated again. For these and the like reasons, when we have to deal with such persons as we are now discoursing of; one of the best ways of shewing our *kindness* and *charity* to them, is, as I said, by laying before them, honestly and fairly, their guilt and danger, and not to sooth them up in their infidelity, by *Commendations and Elogies* of their virtue, justice and probity, to the great disparagement and detriment of

of Religion, and their own sad and fatal disappointment in a matter of high concernment, *viz.* the Salvation of their own Souls. And indeed the condition of those *speculative delinquents* seemes in some regards to be more full of hazard, than that of many *practical sinners*, if I may be allowed so to distinguish them; chiefly for this reason, that generally speaking it is more difficult to reclaim the former, than the latter from the error of their evil waies.

In the practice of sin whatever other pleasure attends it, men find themselves often disturbed by the accusations of their own *reason and conscience*, which is still upbraiding them *with the folly*, and terrifying them with *the guilt* of their evil actions; which often proves, by the assistance of divine grace, an effectual means to lead them to repentance. But in *the profession of error*, (I speak of such who do not act against their Conscience, as some *Hereticks* it is to be feared have done, being influenced by secular motives and designs) a man goes on in his course with pleasure and security; and *his reason* is so far from checking and controuling him, that it rather strikes in with his error, not only approves, but applauds and encourages him in his opposition to divine truth; so that he is not only *under a mistake*, but hereby is put almost *under an impossibility* of being cured of his delusion; which is one of those fatal mischiefs which attend an *erroneous Conscience*, and especially when infected with those errors which concern the foundations of Religion; which are observed to *stupidify and benumme the Conscience*, so that it shall be *past feeling*, nothing shall work upon it: men in this condition being too often found so hardened against all conviction, that neither reproofs nor admonitions, nor arguments, nor even inspiration can make any impression; they set themselves into a posture of hostility against the spirit of God himself, oppose their reason to his revelations, which with a pride like that of *Antichrist*, they exalt against every thing that is called sacred and divine.

Now when men have once arrived to this pass that they *resist the holy Ghost*, it is no wonder that he should retire from them, and leave them to their *own pride, folly, and vanity*, and whither

whither that will lead them in the conclusion no man can foretel. We have seen too many examples of this in the age we live in, *viz.* of men having once forsaken the *common and received truths* of Christianity, that have afterwards fallen from one wild and wicked opinion to another, until at length they have shaken hands with all Religion: and have exalted themselves above *Law and Gospel, Ordinances and Revelations*; to the dishonor of God, the scandal of Religion, the reproach and blemish of our State and Nation; all which have highly suffered by the *wild and frantick opinions* of these men, and the *lewd pranks* which they have played in pursuance thereof.

All which should caution, and affright men from giving way to errors in Religion, which considering the mischievous consequences of them, should not be accounted such slight and inconsiderable matters as some men have represented them; who out of a well-meant perhaps, but mistaken notion of *meekness, charity and moderation*, have given too great countenance and encouragement to such *erroneous opinions*, and thereby may be said to have occasioned some *inconveniencies*, to say no worse of them, which have happened thereupon, and which are much easier complained of than remedied. Instead therefore of *soothing* such men in their errors, we ought as I said before, to lay before them and others the *great danger* they are in by reason of them; and tho we may have no great hopes of doing any good upon such persons themselves, who think themselves too good and too wise to be taught, and make but a jest of all that is charitably offered for their instruction; yet possibly it may make some impression upon others, and prevent their being perverted; especially when they are informed, that the condition of such who are infected with these *Heretical Opinions*, is not only *deplorable*, but in a manner *desperate*; there being but very few of them who when they are once *entangled in these errors*, have ever recovered themselves out of *this snare of the Devil*, as the experience of all Ages assure us.

And thus I have at length finished what I had to say upon this important subject, concerning the necessity of Faith, both as
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to the objects and act of it, in opposition to the contrary opinion of *Socinus* who makes it an *useless* or at best an *indifferent* matter. And I have insisted the longer upon it, because I think it strikes at the root of that *infidelity* which too much prevails, especially among weak and unwary men, who are influenced thereunto by this principle, that morality and a good life, are the only useful necessary parts of Religion.

I should now proceed in the next place, to give an account of that second way and means, whereby *Socinus* and his Disciples undermine the Christian Religion, and that is by advancing *Reason* above *Revelation*, and making that the sole both rule and judge of what we are to believe and practise. But this discourse having already, besides my first intention, grown to too great a Bulk; I must reserve what I have farther to add upon this and the other Heads mentioned in the beginning of this Treatise, for the next and fourth part.

And now to summe up all that hath been said upon this subject, in a few words. If we consult the Scriptures, and rely upon them for information in that important question, *what we shall do to inherit eternal life*; we shall find that the answer will be this, that we must not only *obey the Commandments* of God, but likewise *believe his Revelations*, and especially that part of them which concerns the *Divinity* of our Savior; because otherwise we cannot rightly believe him to be *the Messiah*, which is on all hands acknowledged to be a necessary Article of Faith. 2dly, The same Scriptures will inform us that this *Faith* except it be attended, and indeed adorned with a suitable life and practice will be really *useless* and *insignificant*; without this our *Circumcision* will become *uncircumcision*, and our *Faith* will be no better than *infidelity*. Indeed they are both necessary, both indispensable; and therefore no man without great presumption and Sacrilege, can *separate those things which God hath joined together*; both being by him made the necessary parts of our Religion, and the indispensable conditions of our happiness as I said before. 3dly, That though the *practice of moral virtues*, and those dutys which right reason instructs us in be incorporated into our holy Religion,

and are essential parts and ingredients of it, without which all pretences to Piety and Godlyness, are *hypocritical* and *scandalous*; yet there are some *other duties* farther required of us, which are only discovered by *Revelation*; and the *right manner* of performance even of those moral duties, with relation to their *Principles, Causes, Motives* and *Ends*, depends upon the knowledge and belief of certain supernatural truths, revealed in the Scriptures. And particularly they are founded on the Doctrine of our Saviors *mediation*, as that is on the *Divinity* of his person. 4^{thly}, That these *Christian duties* are the great conditions of the *new Covenant*, upon the performance of which our Salvation depends; which for this reason, makes *Faith* absolutely necessary. It is not indeed required of all in *equal degrees*, and it were extremely uncharitable and unreasonable to think it should, it being sufficient that it should bear some proportion to the *capacities of men* and the *means of information*. But in some degrees it is required of all, at least so far as it is necessary to influence a Christian life and practice. Lastly, that the *Honor of God*, the *Authority of the Scriptures*, the *Welfare of the Christian Religion*, both as to doctrine and duties, knowledge and practice depends on this persuasion, concerning the usefulness and necessity of Faith: as on the other hand, all these are overturned by the contrary Opinion.

And now if notwithstanding all this that hath been said, we can by any pretences of *peace* and *moderation*, or any shews of *Piety* and *Probity*, be prevailed with to think otherwise, and thereby be gulled out of our *Religion*, or out of our *zeal* and *concern for it* (which in time must end in the ruine and extinction of it) then all the world will condemn us, and think that we justly deserve to be deprived of that greatest of blessings, *viz. the light of the Gospel*, which upon such slight reasons, trifling motives (scarce fit to work upon Children,) we did undervalue and despise.

In short, we may expect to fall under that heavy sentence which our Savior passed on the Jews for their obstinacy and infidelity, *The Kingdom shall be taken from you, and given unto a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*, Math. 21. 48. This was the

the summe and upshot, the complement and indeed the cause of all those miseries, which afterwards overtook, and overwhelmed them. When this was gone, *their Glory* then was departed from them, and *their safety* with it. For then they were set apart and devoted to destruction; the decree was gone forth, and mercy it self could not rescue them from ruine. May God open the eyes of men to see the *things that belong to their* spiritual, and indeed their temporal *peace* and security likewise, which can never by any other methods be effectually provided for, if *Religion* which is the great bulwark of a State and Nation, be neglected and despised: It being the irrevocable decree of Heaven, uttered by the mouth of him who is truth it self, who cannot lye and will not repent, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*

The End of the Third part.

